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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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CLOSING THE RANKS

IN appointing Mr. Alexander as Minister of Defence, and excluding the Service Ministers from the Cabinet, Mr. Attlee has carried out one important reform of the machinery of Government which he first proposed in his book *The Labour Party in Perspective*. Already on the domestic side Mr. Morrison has become the co-ordinator of the Ministries concerned with economic planning and Mr. Greenwood of those dealing with Social Services. Meanwhile, Mr. Bevin has assumed final responsibility, not only for the Foreign Office, but all external affairs, including the broad lines of policy to be carried out by the Colonial Office and by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Mr. Alexander, therefore, is the fifth Member of a compact Inner Cabinet, and the authority of the full Cabinet is correspondingly decreased.

There can be no doubt that this grouping of Ministries under Ministers unencumbered by departmental responsibilities is an improvement on previous arrangements. It should reduce the tendency to rigid and often arbitrary compartmentalism and provide the machinery for over-all planning which is as essential in Socialist reconstruction as it was for war. Mr. Churchill's method of solving the problem was by asserting a personal and often erratic ascendancy over all his colleagues. But dictatorship—even on ancient Roman lines—produces as many evils as it cures. Mr. Attlee, who wisely regards the Prime Minister as a chairman rather than a one-man junta, has evolved a system which will probably become a permanent part of our machinery of Government.

It has already been noted that the new arrangement still further increases both the powers and—even more important—the influence of the Chiefs of Staff, whose direct representative Mr. Alexander now becomes. During the war, the Service planners, encouraged by Mr. Churchill, dominated both domestic policy and external affairs. Policy was subordinated to strategy and welfare to security. As a result, war, which should be a continuation of policy, became an end in itself, and the military mind, personified by such men as Air Marshal Harris, became the master and not the servant of the country. To this must be attributed most of the appalling mistakes for which we are now paying in the attempt to rebuild a sane and humane peace out of the debris left by "unconditional surrender."

There is a very real danger that the very efficiency of Mr. Attlee's new organisation will encourage this war psychology and carry it over to the peace making. Instead of a policy designed to avert the danger of war, we shall, if the Defence Committee becomes dominant in external affairs, be predominantly concerned with preparing for the worst. As General Eisenhower expressed it at Edinburgh, our aims should be to put the Generals out of work, and not to submit ourselves to their one-sided political judgments. We are not confident that Mr. Attlee has gone the right way to ensure that these aims will be attained.

Such apprehensions are increased by the political implications of the Government's reshuffle. It still further increases the supremacy of Mr. Bevin in external affairs. Philip Noel-Baker, whose views particularly on Greece, Spain and Palestine did not accord with those of the Foreign Secretary, loses his place in the Cabinet and his influence on foreign policy. Mr. Creech Jones, throughout the war Mr. Bevin's Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, takes over the Colonial Office from Mr. Hall, presumably on the understanding that he puts behind him his Zionist past. Finally, Mr. Alexander, schooled in Churchillian strategy, will be as tenacious a supporter of the Bevin-Byrnes line in the Inner Cabinet as he was throughout the Paris Conference.

More clearly than any speech, these changes give the Government's answer to the demands of Mr. Wallace and General Smuts for a new attempt to bridge the ideological gap between East and West, and to the sober appeals of Mr. Eden and of *The Times* for a reorientation of our foreign policy. Whatever their domestic programme, the Big Five will remain resolutely Churchillian in external affairs. With or without a supply of atomic bombs in Northern Scotland, they will sternly defend the new Maginot-Line against Communism which now seems to be their substitute for policy. No wonder Mr. Churchill found nothing to criticise in the Government's foreign policy, and detected in it a "considerable measure of agreement" with his own convictions.

Instead of appeasing his critics inside and outside the Cabinet by his new appointments, Mr. Attlee has closed the ranks. It would be equally absurd either to deny the concern about these developments inside the Parliamentary Labour Party, or to over-estimate its importance. From the first day of the Session a year ago, it was clear that the continuity of policy which ex-Members of the War Cabinet not unnaturally assumed to be inevitable—they themselves had shared responsibility for Mr. Churchill's policy throughout the war—seemed to a large section of the Party to be a contradiction of their Socialist principles. The events of the last fourteen months have only strengthened this conviction, just as they have confirmed Conservative enthusiasm for the Government's resolution in limiting its Socialism to domestic affairs. There is a genuine and profound disagreement between the Government and a section of its supporters, both on tactics and on principles; and it is almost certain that this disagreement will be expressed during the coming weeks on the floor of the House.

Such criticism will at first have about the same effect on British policy as Mr. Wallace's letter to the President on American. The course of foreign policy will not be immediately deflected. If Mr. Wallace does not wish to disrupt the Democratic Party, the Socialist critics of the Government's policy are even more unwilling to undermine a parliamentary majority which is vital, not only to domestic reconstruction but to democracy throughout the world. What must be hoped for is not a dramatic struggle but a process of persuasion in which facts—including the urgent need for demobilisation and disarmament in the interests of industrial production—will increasingly give point and pungency to Parliamentary speeches. Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes are determined to try out the policy of the "Big Squeeze," as a method of establishing world peace. The first task of their critics is to ensure that the people both in Britain and in America clearly understand what is being done in their name and appreciate that there is an alternative to it.

New York and Palestine

President Truman released his electoral bribe to the New York Jews last Thursday. In requesting a postponement of publication, Mr. Attlee overlooked the necessities of American domestic policy. President Truman's statement was timed to precede Governor Dewey's assurance that many more than 100,000 refugees would enter Palestine under a Republican administration. This remarkable incident should not be dismissed as typical Presidential ineptitude. It is an unwholesome reminder that the word of American politicians on the Palestine issue is worth little in normal times and precisely nothing in the weeks preceding an election. Meanwhile, the situation in Palestine continues to deteriorate, largely owing to the Cabinet's refusal to face the fact that a British decision must precede and not follow Arab-Jewish agreement. The London Conference has been adjourned till mid-December in the hope of persuading Dr. Weizman to enter the Conference. There is talk of a truce. But, as usual, neither side can afford to make sufficient concessions to save the other's face. Dr. Weizman says that he will not become "the Jewish Pétain." His conditions for a truce would have to include an increase of immigration, sufficient to clear the Cyprus camp, and the transfer of General Barker. Mr. Bevin is unlikely to make concessions which will enable the Mufti to rouse the Palestinian Arabs, who have been arming during the summer, to active violence. In these circumstances, the adjournment of the Conference will merely provoke further disorders and make the ultimate solution which will have to be imposed still more difficult.

Set-Back in the Ruhr

Mr. Hynd's recent optimistic survey of conditions in the British Zone in Germany has been sadly belied by subsequent developments. Though exports of coal have been curtailed, the shortage in the two Western Zones is such that further cuts have had to be made in the allocation of coal to the Ruhr. In consequence, steel output is being reduced by 48,000 tons a month; and this involves the closing of five major iron and steel plants and enforced unemployment of over 20,000 workpeople. This, however, is not the end of the vicious spiral: curtailment of steel production means a further slowing up in re-housing and the rehabilitation of rail transport. Side by side with this drift towards economic collapse, the reluctance of the Social-Democratic Party to continue co-operation with the Zonal authorities has been increased by the appointment of reactionary Christian Democrats to leading positions in the German administration of the Zone. At a meeting last week-end in Bremen, attended by German administration chiefs from the British and American Zones (their opposite numbers from the French and Russian Zones declined to attend), the case for over-all planning of production and the distribution of resources between all four Zones was eloquently urged. At a recent meeting, however, of the Control Commission, when the question of pooling coal stocks in all four Zones was raised, deadlock was reached on the question whether production, as well as distribution, should be subjected to Four-Power control in each Zone. Parliament is entitled to demand full details of these negotiations.

Mr. Wallace and a Third Party

It is still too early to be sure what the long-term effects of Henry Wallace's resignation will be on American domestic politics. That his departure has dished the hopes of the Democrats at the election next month may be true, though those hopes were always dim. Last week's meeting of the CIO Political Action Committee and other "progressives" postponed till after the November elections all consideration of forming a Third Party. The question now is whether Wallace has the ability or the desire to start a Third Party, which would be effective in the Presidential elections of 1948. He has a fervent but not large following in the country, with little of Roosevelt's popular appeal or ability as a vote-getter. As Vice-Presidential candidate in 1940 he did not even carry his own state of Iowa. It is now becoming apparent that in leaving the Cabinet on the issue of foreign policy he weakened Mr. Truman far more than he strengthened himself. Mr. Baruch's recent counter-offensive against Wallace and in favour of the American plan for atomic control seems to have been shrewd and effective. But though he is in the wilderness to-day, Wallace is a political figure round whom can rally all those disgusted by the choice between Republican reaction and Truman's ineptitude. The normal argument against splitting the Democratic party—that it will give the election to the Republicans—carries little weight at a time when Mr. Truman seems already to have done so. If, as now seems likely, the Democrats lose control of the House in November, they will face two years of frustration and four more years at least of opposition. During those six years there will be a great opportunity to make the Democratic party liberal, or to build a "progressive" Third Party outside it.

Indonesia's Future

The opening meeting between the Dutch and Indonesian Delegations, under the Chairmanship of Lord Killearn, seems to have made a good beginning to the negotiations on which the future of Indonesia depends. Dr. Sjahrir made a generous tribute to the British troops who had fulfilled a "difficult task with just appreciation of the Indonesian national movement," and Professor Schermerhorn underlined this point. The real difficulties underlying these negotiations will now be discussed by a Committee which will have before it the truce conditions already broadcast by the Indonesian Republican Government. They demand a truce for the whole of Indonesia; the immediate suspension of the transportation of Dutch troops to the area; the lifting of the land, sea and air blockade; the repatriation of all Japanese prisoners, military and civilian, and a guarantee by the Allies that no arms are handed over, directly or indirectly, to the Dutch. If the last word were with such outstanding Dutch Liberals as Van Mook and Schermerhorn, there is no doubt that a satisfactory agreement could now be negotiated with the Indonesian Republican Government whose consolidation, at any rate in Java and Sumatra, they have cautiously acknowledged. But the Dutch military clique in Indonesia still gambles on the breakdown of negotiations; and, when once the British troops are withdrawn on November 30th, they believe they can risk an all-out attack on the Indonesian Government. The training of more Dutch troops in Britain gives them some reason for this irresponsibility. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the British Government, which has played a modifying role and brought both sides together in the face of reactionary Dutch opposition, will make it quite clear that no further training in England will be contemplated of Dutch combat troops, such as the so-called Second Division.

The Catering Strike

Without emotion, Londoners this week have witnessed the unusual spectacle of a strike in the principal hotels on the American model. The strikers carry banners demanding recognition of their trade union and reminding the public that if the servants in Buckingham Palace have trade union rights, then the Savoy can also fall into step. Conditions in the catering trade have long been a crying scandal, and there is little doubt that the strikers will win the day. After all, what does the case of the hotel proprietors amount to? That they and their distinguished, or at least well-to-do, clientele dislike the restrictions of trade unionism and prefer the old-fashioned conditions of personal service, in which workers are always on tap at any time of day or night. It is an easy case to understand but not defensible. Waiters, it seems, are still often paid no more than a nominal wage, and make up a meagre income by the fluctuating increment of tips. Some work such long and late hours that they cannot reach their homes at night and have to rent a room in which to sleep in London. The hotels will have to end these bad and antiquated conditions; and if, in order to maintain the high standard of comfort for their clients, they have to increase their staffs and treat them better, will even the shareholders regret it?

Next Stage in Public Ownership

At long last, the Government is ready with a Bill dealing with the problems of land-use, betterment and compensation, and this measure, which is the most complicated yet brought before the present Parliament, will be certain to take up a good deal of time during the coming session. It will compete for parliamentary time with Mr. Chuter Ede's major measure of prison reform. Steel is to wait until later, and we shall probably get no nearer to finding out what the Government really means by its plans to acquire a controlling interest in a number of the leading firms. The next stage in the battle between public and private enterprise is to be fought out, not over steel, but over road transport and electricity which, much more than the railways, the gasworks, or the canals, are the effective centres of capitalist opposition. As for electricity, there are convincing reasons for bringing the generating stations under the unified control of the "Grid" authority, and for tidying up the mess of local distributive agencies with widely differing efficiencies and charges. In the case of road transport it is much harder to draw the precisely correct line between the large enterprises, which ought to be taken over and merged with the railways into a unified system of national transport, and the smaller agencies which can best be left independent, though not of course unrelated. No one, we suppose, wants to nationalise the local carrier's cart; and there will be no proposal to prevent firms from carrying their own goods if they please. But that does not tell exactly where to draw the line. As for gas, there is much to be said in favour of large regional autonomy within a national organisation.

Cooperation in World Conference

The International Cooperative Alliance has been holding its first post-war Conference this week in Switzerland. The I.C.A., though its international connections were broken during the period of Nazi control in Europe, was less damaged than the old I.F.T.U., because Nazi policy, though hostile to the Consumers' Cooperatives, made use for its own purposes of the agricultural Cooperatives in the peasant areas. It was therefore easier to reconstruct the Cooperative movement on a democratic basis in those areas than to rebuild the Trade Unions. In the towns there has been a lot of difficulty in extricating the consumers' societies, especially the wholesale trading societies, from the hands into which many of them had fallen under Nazi rule; but in most countries the consumers' movement, as well as the agricultural, is now getting back on to its feet. The Scandinavian Cooperatives are playing a leading part in endeavouring to build up closer "inter-cooperative" trading relations; and the British Cooperatives are also anxious to develop work of this type. The latest move, in which the growing Cooperative movement in the United States is taking an active share, is the establishment of an International Cooperative Agency for the trade in petroleum products. Cooperative oil-supply has been developing fairly fast in the United States; and it is now planned to develop it on an international scale. The I.C.A. is also staking out its claim to be regarded as one of the "consultative parties" attached to the U.N.O. Economic and Social Council. As one of the main links between East and West—for the Soviet

Co-operatives have long belonged to it and have played an active part in its development—the I.C.A. deserves every help from those who hope to see the barriers between the two Europes broken down by democratic collaboration.

PARLIAMENT: First Impressions

Wednesday

OPENING his locker each Member makes the age-old comment to himself that it is just like returning to school. Suddenly life switches from hundreds of different worlds outside to the close, confining and absorbing interests of a single building. There is the same slight sense of qualm and the same sense of surprise as one discovers that, after all, this is the only thing that matters.

It is far too early yet to judge the temper of the House. Everyone seemed to slip into his old mannerisms, quite naturally, at Question Time on Tuesday. Herbert Morrison had his answer to his critics, who queried his use of a Government car and petrol on holiday in Ireland; and he must have been grateful to the ebullient Hogg whose ineptitude enabled him to rub it in. Dick Stokes was soon bashing about as breezily as ever; and, as though to show that even the bad boy has his chance in a new term, the House gave Garry Allighan a cheer when he submitted a petition for the Parachutists.

It is already clear that the Parliamentary Labour Party will be far more difficult to handle than it was last winter when the new boys still felt that they were on probation. Enthusiasm and loyalty are as strong as ever, but they are now tempered by a knowledge of the procedure of the House and of the ways of Whips, which makes it more difficult to put things across at a Party meeting. It was unfortunate for the Government and for Fred Bellenger that the first important item on the Agenda was the Kluang mutiny. The new Secretary of State for War read his statement firmly and rubbed in his war experience in answer to supplementaries. But nothing could atone for the smugness of his attitude. The Tories, of course, were delighted and the Government benches correspondingly indignant at what they felt to be an inauspicious indication that the Cabinet has not yet learned that it is more important to act according to its own convictions than to prove its respectability to its opponents.

Fortunately the Adjournment debate brought a refreshing contrast. Jennie Lee raised the issue of anti-Fascist prisoners of war in an excellent speech, supported by Derek Walker-Smith from the Opposition side. Then Paget ground out an emphatically discordant note and gave John Freeman a chance to shine, on his first appearance at the dispatch box. He was well briefed, modest, and, in contrast to his Minister, both human and humane.

The debate on the Atomic Energy Bill started flatly and never recovered, despite a good maiden speech by Ranger, a useful contribution by Blackburn, and the usual acidulated intervention by Pickthorn. In opening the debate, the Prime Minister gave the unconsciously revealing assurance: "This Bill has no background of political bearing. It is forced upon us by the very nature of this new invention. We are not introducing a sudden Bill for nationalisation. We are taking the steps which any Government must take . . ." The House rapidly emptied and the few who remained seemed overawed by the subject and determined that a dreary theme should be drearily debated.

Meanwhile, outside the Chamber, Members discussed, with far less than the expected interest, the Cabinet reshuffle. It seems to leave things as they were, only a little more so. There is a lot of sympathy with Philip Noel-Baker and a wide-spread feeling that what the Foreign Office needed was not a change of personnel, but an extra Parliamentary Secretary. Still, everyone agrees that Hector McNeil has earned promotion; and that his success, despite his lack of previous experience in foreign affairs, should encourage his successor. Christopher Mayhew was obviously as surprised at his appointment as his colleagues, while Ivor Thomas must be relieved to feel that in confronting the problems of the Colonies, he has at least escaped from the attentions of the Civil Aviation Group.

PHINEAS

HIS MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION

ALWAYS the Tweedledum of British politics, Mr. Churchill's appetite for a battle needs little whetting; at the Blackpool Conference of the Conservative Party he hit out with a will at everything within reach, "whether he could see it or not." The Government was belaboured with thwacking invective: its "exceptional ineptitude and inefficiency" matched with the "doctrinaire malice" of "tyrannical and subversive elements" was carrying this country forward to a situation so grave that he (Mr. Churchill) felt that duty forbade him to relinquish the Party's leadership and retire into private life. His cheering audience was invited to look at "the taxes"; at bread rationing, fastened on the British people by Socialist planners "when the sea is open and world harvests good"; at a housing shortage perpetuated by Mr. Bevan's prejudices; at empty coal scuttles and fireless grates; at a swollen bureaucracy; and at the Indian jewel of the British crown thrust into the hands of men hostile to the British connection and unrepresentative of the people of India. To all these flesh-creeping spectacles the assembled delegates willingly turned their eyes. Tweedledum was behaving as they wanted him to behave. Had not their "beautiful rattle"—the long-savoured enjoyment of political power and privilege—been broken by an ungrateful electorate?

It is easy to say that Mr. Churchill, the virtuoso of contemporary demagogy, dominated the Conference of His Majesty's Opposition. In the sense that he overshadowed his colleagues on the platform, this is true. But it is equally true, and more important, that the platform at the Blackpool Conference was dominated by the floor. It was in vain that the more progressively minded elements evinced signs of discomfort at the absence of anything recognisable as positive Tory policy. Mr. Eden was allowed to produce as his slogan "a property-owning democracy," though neither he nor anyone else attempted to explain what content this phrase could have in a period of monopoly capitalism. But isolated voices calling for a considered programme were voted down. The delegates, it was evident, did not want a positive policy, least of all a programme designed to make any constructive appeal to the working-class. Brotherly love and fine thinking was not their mood: what they wanted was hatred and coarse thinking; and that they got, not only from Mr. Churchill, but from a spate of angry resolutions clamouring for indiscriminate building of houses "no matter who gets them," the abandonment of all controls, and a fight to the death against the "insidious steps" which were being undertaken to undermine "our liberty."

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the Conservative Conference was therefore devoid of political significance. Mr. Churchill did little to sketch even the barest outline of policy: his promise to defend the general public against abuses by monopolies and against restraints on trade may be dismissed as typical verbiage, coming quaintly from the lips of the leader of the Party of Big Business. What he did was to indicate with considerable clarity the future *tactics* of his Party; and these evidently are to have no distinctive policy, to put forward nothing vulnerable to criticism, and to hope that a situation will arise, or can be engineered by the obstruction of vested interests, in which the electorate can be persuaded to put the blame on the Government and to turn instinctively to those who can at least claim that they have opposed its whole domestic policy. In those circumstances Mr. Churchill significantly left himself free to co-operate with all who were prepared to join in the fight against Communism. Indeed, he excluded the Government's foreign policy from his general commination: it had had a "salutary influence abroad." His calculation seems rather to be that the Opposition can successfully exploit the sentiment, rational or irrational, of disappointment and frustration at home.

It may be objected that Mr. Churchill did in fact present his Party with an Eight-point Charter. The objectives, however, summarised therein were such that they could be subscribed to, with little qualification, by every member of the present Government. Six of the points—preservation of the monarchy and Parliament, security against external aggression, maintenance of law and order, a sound budget, the development of Empire trade, and the promotion of measures to improve social conditions—were timeless platitudes. Of the two remaining points, support for free enterprise "as a general rule" against nationalisation does not conflict very sharply with the Labour Government's present programme of limited, selective public ownership, from whose scope the great bulk of the country's economic activities is excluded. Nor are we aware of any actions of the Government which make it incumbent on the Opposition "to uphold the Christian religion." Unless we are to suppose that this means that Mr. Churchill identifies the Christian religion with that Christian gentleman the Caudillo, or that the Conservative Party is to be rallied behind the U.S. State Department's conception of a Catholic Bloc as the keystone of European democracy, the call to "resist all attacks" upon Christianity is presumably to be regarded as a mere variant on the anti-Communist theme. As a marching song in this crusade, Mr. Churchill offered his followers the stirring refrain of "Land of Hope and Glory." That "noble hymn which will rally the wise, the sober-minded and the good" to drown the alien strains of the "Red Flag."

In short, Conservatism, for which the Blackpool Conference had no desire to find another more popularly attractive name, is to live not by a blue-print of works, but by faith—faith that if "the haves" hold on stubbornly enough to what they have got, they can defeat Socialism by non-co-operation and can utilise the Press to make it appear to the less politically educated voter that it was "all the Government's fault." Such is the calculation—at any rate of the Party's Right Wing. In their view the tactical merits of having no policy are that, in its absence, one has the freest possible scope to exploit instinctive reaction, cloaked under the guise of liberty and patriotism.

The tactical weakness of this traditional Conservative attitude is that, though Blackpool showed little awareness of the fact, the bulk of the electorate is likely to continue to deny power to a Party which stands merely for the *status quo* and the defence of property. As long as Conservatives were confident that they were the real rulers of England, even if they were occasionally out of office, they could rely on the swing of the pendulum and improvise policy as occasion arose. For the first time they fear they may have lost power as well as office. Hence the leaders of the Party Conference must eventually consider a wider public than that which is represented by the cheering partisans who alone have the opportunity of tasting the heady wine of Annual Conferences. In a word, the Tory leaders have yet to face the problems of an Opposition. Putting back the clock is an inadequate programme for an alternative Government.

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MIDWEST DISCURSION

"WHEN'S the war?" asked my cab-driver, an ex-G.I. No need to ask which war he meant. In Chicago, the most successful newsboy last month was one who stood in Lassalle St, lugubriously calling, "Russ-ia! Russ-ia!" The visitor from Britain finds himself dropped into a pre-war atmosphere, the atmosphere of 1938, where the citizen can only look on his undamaged cities and rich harvests with melancholy, as he listens to continuous talk about a hypothetical war.

No one is sadder than Chicago's white-faced atomic scientists. They had the job, in major part, of developing the atomic bomb; now they must labour to improve it. With the reticence of men who are bowed down by a secret, and heavy-hearted because of the tasks to which they are bound, they told me that the world's only hope lies—in World Government. Listening to Leo Szilard, the Nobel prize-winner, I remembered Einstein, soon after Hitler came to power, recommending to a crowded emotional demonstration in the Albert Hall that the British Government should take over disused lighthouses as retreats for contemplative scientists.

World Government to abolish anarchy is an agreeable prospect. But World Government is far, and the anarchists are here. The atomic bomb is relatively small, easily made, readily carried and cheap. Will the conscience of the world—and its common sense—awake before a few men, statesmen or soldiers, abuse the scientists' discovery? Can the "practical" men drop the bomb quicker than the scientists and their friends can evangelise a world where nationalisms are even fiercer in 1946 than in 1938?

The shooting down of the U.S. fliers by the Yugoslavs stimulated a passionate anger in America, which the trial of the Yugoslav Primate, Archbishop Stepinacs, has fed. The Midwest is incensed by what it regards as a twofold insolence directed against America and the Church. The mass-feeling, which the Taft and McCormick press continually strokes, is such that a preventive war to "teach the Russian bastards a lesson" and to destroy Communism as well as the Soviet Power, would not require a great deal of public preparation, were it not for one circumstance—the "atomic conscience" from which America is acutely suffering. John Hersey's account in the *New Yorker* of Hiroshima's destruction, based on eye-witness reports, made a deserved impression. The 100,000 dead of the city came to life through his detailed story of several survivors, including a Catholic priest. "The Japanese aren't monkeys after all," says the surprised American reader. And when Hersey's story ends, and the 100,000 return to their ashes, many Americans ask themselves whether the dropping of the atom bomb on a living city was not a crime against mankind.

The Midwest doesn't want a preventive war, nor any other war. But should there be a war, it wants it to take place as far from the U.S.A. as ocean bases will permit. The isolationist Midwest recognises that it would be better to fight Russia on the shores of the Mediterranean and in China rather than in the air over Chicago and the Great Lakes. There is also a modified isolationism, which would accept Britain in military alliance for a war of limited liability in which America would drop the atomic bombs, while British fleets and occupation troops would issue from Britain, the U.S.A.'s Atlantic bastion.

The Midwest Liberals, like the editors of the *Chicago Sun*, are unhappy, convinced that the Labour Government is following a Tory policy of imperialism sweetened with cant. They concede Britain's good intentions in India; they do not admit to Britain even good intentions in Greece and Palestine. The Liberal commentators are in the doubly unfortunate position of feeling that their British friends have failed them at a time when their domestic enemies are intensifying their attack. The fiercest interventionists during the war, the most ardent supporters of the loan, the most friendly welcomers of the Labour Government were the Liberals. For them, the past year has been one of disappointment and defeat. Their President defected by adding to his entourage reactionary Southern Democrats. Britain seems to have failed them in her foreign policy; and their one-time hope, Wallace, is driven from the Government to fight for peace. But they are not quite sure about him either, or the extent to which he will travel with the Left Wing of the C.I.O. Political Action Committee. Without a party, without leadership, without even the Labour Government as a compass, the Midwestern Liberals drift, with only the *Chicago Sun* to guide them.

Not all of this is loss to Britain, since what has been forfeited in Liberal support has been gained in Right-Wing Republican sympathy. Reassured that the Labour Government isn't Bolshevik after all, many Republicans are prepared to put Britain on probation with a view ultimately to a junior partnership in world politics.

The world scene is disturbing; but more annoying still to the Midwest housewife is the lack of meat down-town. Where has it gone? Most of it is on its way from the ranges to the "feed lots" in the Corn Belt, where an all-time record crop of nearly 3,500,000,000 bushels is expected. This is part of the attack by the producers on OPA's price control of meat. If they can "overwinter" their cattle on the crammed ranges, and fatten them cheaply on the "feed lots," they will be able to command better prices next year than they can get at controlled prices or even in the black market which many are glad to indulge in, just to spite what they call "the Washington Snafucrats." Meanwhile, meat-starved G.I.'s are to be fed by borrowing meat paradoxically from rationed Britain.

The struggle by the Administration to peg prices—a struggle in which it steadily yields ground under lobby pressure—is balanced by the equally unsuccessful fight of the employers to peg wages. The American trade union movement is young, politically all-thumbs and somewhat schizophrenic. The A.F.L. and the C.I.O. often require two separate strikes to achieve a single objective. Many employers are as fiercely anti-Labour as in the 19th century and early 20th century British employers were anti-trade union.

In Chicago the employers charged that the unions were corrupt. In Cincinnati, a town with a more unified tradition than Chicago, it was the Mayor's pride that the unions were honest. I met both A.F.L. and C.I.O. leaders lunching together like placid tigers and found them comparable in their interests, their prejudices and their enthusiasms with any gathering of Trade Union organisers in a Midland town in England. All wanted to win all the workers in their craft or industry for their Union; some said that the U.S.A. can work with Russia; others that there is no point of contact; the C.I.O. organisers welcomed the opportunity of taking part in the World Federation of Trade Unions; the A.F.L. thought this a betrayal; the C.I.O. were making a successful drive to organise the Negroes, particularly in the South; the A.F.L. seemed less eager.

A Negro spat out a stream of red blood as we left the club where we had met. "It's the T.B.", said one of the labour leaders. "Most have it!" The Negro's major post-war problems are the same as everyone else's but worse. For accommodation equal to that of a white person he must pay far higher rents; if he moves into a "White" block, the Whites move out and the landlord reduces his standard of decent repair and amenities. The lynchings in the South are the savage expression of the fear of men like Senator Bilbo that the Negro veteran returning from Europe, where he was treated like a man, will become too big for his boots. The Negro is pushed back into his overcrowded slums, venereal disease, tuberculosis, and then is told that he is not up to White standards because of the way he lives and the condition of his health.

And yet, in the general surge of American life—that vital energy which uplifts and excites the visitor from an ageing Europe—the Negro benefits, too. In Cincinnati, for example, Negroes sweat in the hottest and hardest foundry jobs of the Cincinnati Machine Tool Corporation. But what British foundry worker would not think his work immeasurably lightened in an electrical foundry which is spacious and airy, where most of the lifting is done by mechanical means, and most of the carrying is performed by trolleys and overhead pulleys? Whatever America may yet learn from Britain in the matter of politics, we may well take lessons from the U.S.A., not in the individual worker's skill, for British craftsmanship is still better than American—but in factory organisation, production planning and the economical use of human energy.

With America's present productive capacity, the domestic market could be filled within eighteen months with all the goods and commodities that could comfortably be consumed. After that a flood of unabsorbable production, the bursting out into export markets and the overwhelming of weaker competitors. Luckily for America, luckily for Britain, industrial disputes, with the consequence of loss of production, are holding industry back and postponing the state of over-production and slump. Instead of a planned output of 5 million units for 1946, the U.S. motor industry will only produce 3 million units. The estimated demand is 7 million units. It seems possible, therefore, that the familiar estimate of an American slump in 18 months may prove wrong.

Great fortunes were made in munitions during World War II, as the Congressional Inquiry has already indicated. Nuclear fission—alas for the munitions men—may well take most of the profit out of further wars. Whether there is a Republican Congress or not, the best way for American big business to retain its prosperity from the Second World War is to start thinking in terms of general peace and international trade, forgetting the lopsided vision of Fulton, Mo.

MAURICE EDELMAN

AUTUMN SESSION

(after John Keats)

SESSION of mists and mellow usefulness,
Mild *milieu* of maturing Ministers
Resolved to tread the Parliamentary press
And squeeze ten times the yield of earlier years;
To guide the gathering swarm as they return,
To fill with stuffing, tighter than a drum,
The ripe portfolio, till it plumps and swells
To bursting, as the hive begins to hum,
While in a wailful choir lost Liberals mourn,
While Tories map their still-receding bourne,
And Communists repair their clammy cells.

Who has not heard that warm autumnal drone
As murmuring Members throng the Commons floor
Lulled by the ceaseless thrumming undertone
Sometimes disturbed by Bevin's muffled roar,
Sometimes by Morrison's full-bodied crow
As he bears in the legislative sheaves
While Members between sleep and waking waft,
Drowsed by the boom of Dalton, deep and low,
Or by the buzz of Bevan, as he leaves
His housing hosts neck-high among the eaves,
To pour his soothing, medicated draught?

Where are the Bills of spring? Well, where are they?
Some have already reached the Statute Book,
Still more are passed with each slow-passing day,
Watched by stunned Tories with uneasy look,
While slumberous sounds the dozy Chamber drench,
And nodding Members in their tasks immersed;
And now the Premier's whistle soft and clear
Pipes sweetly from the winnowed Treasury Bench.
Another measure, stage by stage is nursed;
The Opposition gives a fitful burst
And squashed back-benchers chirrup in the rear.

SAGITTARIUS

CONTINENTAL DIARY

It would be wrong to say that we were packed like sardines while we waited for our passports to be stamped at Basle, for that would imply that we had lost our heads, which we hadn't. On the contrary we just shuffled along in a mass, making remarks in questionable taste about the officials (one Swiss, one French) each of whom had to examine each of our passports. I reflected on Mr. Bevin's remarks about the futility of passports and recalled that the world was not any less "safe" forty years ago when a happier generation travelled without any passports at all. Visas in the case of most countries are now merely a way of making a little unearned income. A spy trying to cross a frontier would not be spotted through his passport. During the war hundreds of people have learnt, with the aid of governments, to forge unimpeachable passports.

* * *

What, you may ask, about money control? A Customs official did actually ask me if I had *valuta* in my suit case, and a suspicious Frenchwoman at Calais turned out the contents of my pocket-book. But if I had been smuggling currency, I should not have kept it loose in my bag or alongside my authorised quota of pound notes. That's not how it works. If one takes an English pound to a bank in Italy, one receives 900 lire. A shop will exchange the same pound sterling, for 1,200 or even 1,600 lire. On the one occasion when I was forced, because the banks were closed, to change money at a shop, I received 1,200 lire on condition that I bought articles which I did not want. In other words I received the legal number of lire plus an unsolicited gift of a lace table centre. But if I had changed my pound in Basle I should have been given 17 Swiss francs, each of them worth 150 to 170 lire in Milan. This would have given me 2,500 lire for my pound, and I should have been nearly three times as rich. Many people have learnt this trick during the last few months. On the train home I heard them discussing it. The game is to pay in advance to an English agency one's return fare and all one's hotel expenses. That leaves £75 basic allowance for pocket money. Having changed this, or part of it, into Swiss francs, and got on to a Swiss bus which takes trippers to Milan or Venice, the English tourist arrives to find himself a millionaire with an embarrassing choice in the Italian shops. Never was such an intoxicating feast of superb consumers' goods to be had dirt cheap. Ladies buy complete new outfits, including jewelry, and talk about their angora frocks and silk stockings all the way home. Which brings me to the third point—the Customs. Again, with trains waiting, the harassed officials at Dover are no more able to search everyone's luggage than the Italian officials are able to strip everyone to find out how many Swiss francs they are taking into Italy. The net result is an infuriating and humiliating farce, a mockery of the law and an incitement to lying.

* * *

Listening to the conversations of my fellow travellers, I concluded that there was an even worse result. A Continental holiday is now surrounded with the emotional atmosphere of a race for a bargain basement. The sophisticated used to laugh at tourists who went to Italy with guide-books and solemnly toured the art galleries to make sure that they had not missed the Titians or Botticellis. This was a poor case for ridicule, because Baedeker and Muirhead can be really valuable introductions to an unfamiliar country. The visitor who is told what is good may incidentally discover what he likes; he may come away from Rome or Florence with eyes open to a new world. But the modern tourist, after seven years' austerity at home, is not looking for beauty; he is not interested in Michelangelo or Leonardo. He is looking for shoes to be bought without coupons, and handbags at a tenth of their price in England. Foreigners used to laugh at the British tourists of the past. They no longer laugh; they curse.

* * *

Naturally these English visitors, to say nothing of the American and other Service people on leave in Venice or Rome, get a completely false picture. Here are shops, with goods unobtainable anywhere except perhaps on Fifth Avenue, at prices which are prohibitive to most Italians. They walk along a few main streets and find, apart from the tourist baubles, unlimited cream cakes, whole cheeses, superb leather goods and beautiful textiles of all sorts. They see the Italians smiling, as always, and, in the radiant sunshine, looking brown and healthy. They know nothing of tuberculosis statistics. They report that all is well with Italy, and contrast this happy land with the dreary austerity of Britain. Few of them take the trouble to walk down back streets and to see how bare are the shops where the Italians buy; few of them even know that there are more than two million unemployed Italian workers (a shockingly large proportion in a country with a 40-million population, over 50 per cent. of which is peasantry), that of these workers a large number, as the authorities admit, receive about half as much as they need for food alone; that, as always happens in an inflation, many people with small fixed incomes are actually starving behind shuttered windows, and that the whole economy of Italy is rapidly shaking to bits. The Government can scarcely be said to rule north of Florence or south of Rome, and even in Tuscany and Umbria no one seems to take much notice of any official regulation. In fact, Italy is a perfect example of a country which, in conditions of real shortage, yet abandons controls and leaves everything to the free working of the capitalist system. In post-war conditions this means limitless black marketing and immense riches for a few; a vain scramble of wages to catch up with prices; extreme poverty for part of the working class and starvation for the small remnant of the rentiers.

* * *

That inflation has not yet reached catastrophic proportions is largely due to the ignorance of the peasants. They do not yet understand inflation and they have acquired during recent years immense quantities of lire. At least, a third—and some say more than half—of all the currency issued is now hidden in the beds and stockings of the *contadini*. Thousand lire notes naturally seem to them great wealth, and they are quite unwilling to spend them in the shops, where the prices seem to them outrageous. They argue very shrewdly that if they bought cars, improved their houses or otherwise allowed the Government to know they had saved money, they would be subjected to new taxes or be the victims of a currency reform which would deprive them of their war profits. If they suddenly started using their money, Italy would be plunged into a catastrophic inflation. So it is the peasants who save the situation by hoarding.

* * *

The second factor of immense importance has been the help of Unrra. In Rome I met the chief Unrra officials, and formed the highest opinion of their ability and disinterested desire for Italian welfare. What will happen when Unrra winds up, as it is due to do next spring, no one can readily imagine. If Unrra packs up at about the same time that the Allied troops move out (as they must do, within ninety days after the signing of peace) I am told that rioting, runaway inflation, starvation, disease and possibly civil war will follow. So far the Italians have shown great self-restraint. The comparatively few strikes have been orderly and the result of sheer necessity; and the widespread resentment at the Treaty proposals, which seem to take no notice of Italy's aid to the Allies during the last period of the war, at present finds no organised expression. But dangers are so obvious that I expect the Americans, fearing Bolshevism and always looking for spheres of influence, to produce a loan before things move to extremes. But Italy needs more than a loan; she needs trading arrangements with Russia and the Balkans; she needs an outlet in emigration and, above all, a government strong enough to have a policy and able to control the vast smuggling that drains the goods from her people. Note, too, any relief organisation which is to take the place of Unrra must be created at once. People forget that just as in war it takes six months to a year to plan and mobilise the supplies for an important military operation, so after the war (when "priorities" have disappeared!) it needs even longer to prepare for any large-scale relief operation.

* * *

After even a glimpse of the smooth normality of Switzerland—and what country has ever attained such comfortable efficiency?—one can almost hear the creaking and groaning of the rusty machinery of life in post-war England. After the beauty of Italy—and no country presents so fair a landscape, such intoxicatingly beautiful towns or a population so graceful—post-war England seems dreary and colourless. This impression, unavoidable as it is, is of course very superficial. Switzerland is rich; the Swiss kept out of the war. Italy, gay and happy on the surface, is economically on the rocks; much of her population undernourished and many of her towns and villages destroyed. I agree whole-heartedly with Gerald Barry who, in a fine broadcast after his return from the Continent, contrasted the haphazard inequalities of some countries today with the purposeful sharing of discomfort in Britain. But I am beginning to ask whether even from the strictly economic point of view it would not now be wise to relax to some degree the British policy of austerity. It does not matter that British visitors to the Continent complain that they can buy British cigarettes or motor cars more cheaply in Switzerland than they can in England; it doesn't matter very much that they mistake the Italian black market for real prosperity. But I wonder whether more consumers' goods in the shops would not, in fact, increase British production and so help rather than hinder our export trade? What incentive have British women to return to work in the factories if there is so little to buy with the wages they would earn? What incentive has a workman to earn more money? Judging by the fantastic dividends declared by dog-racing companies, gambling is their chief outlet. And there is another question. Are we not to an unnecessary degree running the risk of associating Socialism with cheerlessness? God forbid that we should ever reach the conditions in Italy, where you cannot have a meal without half a dozen beggars standing with outstretched palms at your side, but is that really the price that would have to be paid for having a lot of bright-coloured paint to splash about our cities? Or having a gay display of children's toys and more of the goods that we know that "Britain can Make" available to the householder?

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. J. Klein.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The lady assistant said: "I am sorry, madam. We have not size sevens."

Whereupon the irate customer raised her basket and struck the assistant with it, remarking: "That is for being rude."

As she left the shop she turned to the astonished assistant and struck her again with the basket, saying: "And that is for not having them!"—*Hornsey Journal.*

For the defence it was suggested that a disgruntled worker might have put the mouse in the cake before it was baked. Everything was done to keep mice out of the bakery.—*Daily Express.*

I see that there is another controversy on the question of returning the statue of Eros to Piccadilly Circus. . . . Dear as the statue is to many, would it not be more fitting to erect in 'the heart of the Empire' a lively statue of one or other of our war leaders? If this cannot be done, I'd suggest that Eros be refitted with some weapon more in keeping with the present age than a bow and arrow!—Letter in *Picture Post*.

"He had better read the full report from Nuremberg," remarked Mr. Paul Bennett, V.C., the Marlborough Street Magistrate, when he was told by the police that 18-year-old William Rutherford Lumley, of Winchester Road, Hampstead, seemed to have developed a pro-German outlook since he acquired a German-made bicycle two years ago.—*Hampstead and Highgate Express.*

I once heard of a woman who had her husband cremated and his ashes put in an egg-timer. She said he had never worked for her in his life, so he might as well do something now.—Letter in *Daily Mirror.*

THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS

(In our issue of September 7th Mr. Zilliacus reviewed the position and prospects of the French Socialist Party. In the following article he gives his impressions, gained from a visit to France, of the situation and attitude of the French Communists.)

WITH a million members and the backing of five million votes at the last General Election, the French Communist Party represents a political force without whose concurrence government by consent in France would be impossible. Government without them would be government without, or in opposition to, the French working-class. The Executive Committee of the six million strong C.G.T. consists of 13 members—6 Communists, 6 Socialists and 1 Radical. But the real control of the C.G.T. is about 85 per cent. Communist.

Working through the C.G.T. the Communists from the morrow of liberation onwards preached the doctrine of maximum production. They first held back, then co-ordinated and disciplined wage demands; and finally, when they judged that production had been increased to the point when wages could be raised without inflation, they put forward the demand for a 25 per cent. all-round rise and secured, after hard bargaining with the Government, an increase of 18 per cent.

One surprising result has been the growing peasant vote for the Communists. According to what one Communist leader told me, the reasons are twofold. First, in parts of France, particularly in the South, the old revolutionary tradition still lingers, and the peasants vote for the "Left" party. Secondly, "the peasants have got the idea that city folk are lazy, whereas the peasant sweats his guts out from dawn till dark. And so, when we came along and told the workers to work harder and longer and to forgo their wage demands for the sake of the whole community, including the countryside, the peasants were impressed. And when our policy actually produced results, the old peasant scratched his head, said '*Ce sont des gens sérieux*'—and voted for us!"

I went to some pains to find out what was the attitude of the French Communist Party towards democracy. Here it is, in the form of a digest of the points made by two of the principal Communist leaders:

> A great many things have happened since the first world war and the Russian Revolution. Today we are a party with ten Ministers in the Government, a goodly number of M.P.s and 5,000,000 votes. We have a strong position in the working class and the Trades Unions that makes us indispensable for reconstruction, and our influence among the peasantry is spreading. A great party with such a powerful position and such great responsibilities obviously cannot think and act as do those who are a small sect.
>
> The patriotic myth, the mystic sense of representing the whole nation, from which the ruling class derived its emotional authority and on which it relied as its last line of defence against the claims of reason and the advance of democracy—this legendary prestige the propertied classes have lost because of their collaboration with Vichy and Hitler. It has passed to the workers, because they were the backbone of the Resistance and are the heart and hands and much of the brains of reconstruction. It is now we who are the saviours and representatives of France and can speak in the name of patriotism and the nation. The taint of treason clings to the defenders of property and the old order.
>
> In these circumstances we have nothing to fear from democracy. On the contrary, democracy has become an instrument that we can use for our purposes. It is a weapon we can turn against the other side. It is they who are now afraid of democracy. It is they who will be constantly tempted to avert defeat by turning traitor to democracy. And if and when they do, we will give our full support through or to the Government then in power, to those who uphold law and order and vindicate the rights of democracy against a reactionary *coup d'état.*

French Communists are primarily interested, it will be observed, in promoting the change-over from capitalism to Socialism, and support capitalist democracy today (as they have more or less consistently done since the 7th Comintern Congress in 1935) in so far as they believe it can be successfully used to effect this transition. They are beginning to find in practice, whatever they profess in theory, that it may carry them all the way in the conditions of the post-war world.

The French Communists, I found, are anxious to have close and friendly contacts with the Labour Party. They like the foreign policy set forth in the Labour Party's Report on *The International Post-war Settlement*, and believe our two countries could co-operate with each other in world affairs on those lines. But they have no use for the policy of a Western Bloc under American patronage, of hostility to the Left throughout Europe, and of trying to bolster up feudalism in the Middle East at the expense of the Jews of Palestine and the workers in the Persian oilfields, in order to build up an anti-Soviet balance of power.

The moral, as I see it, is that if the Labour Party does not want to isolate itself from the workers of Europe, it must co-operate with both Socialist and Communist Parties in all countries where both are strong enough to matter, as they are in France.

K. ZILLIACUS

HERMANN GÖRING

MY sharpest recollection of Göring is of the forecast he uttered of World War II, nine years ahead of the event. Even now, the candour with which he confided in broad outline the Nazi plan for conquest is as amazing to me as the crude miscalculations which he included in his preview of Germany's destiny. Nothing but his unbridled vanity can explain the frankness with which he disclosed the plan for aggrandisement.

This particular conversation occurred in October, 1930, more than two years after I had first met him. We were sitting alone at lunch in a small restaurant in Berlin's Dorotheenstrasse, about five minutes' walk from the Reichstag, the same Reichstag which Göring was later to use as a torch, lighting the Nazis' ascent to power. A table in the centre of the dining-room was laden with shellfish and other delicacies. My bulging host pored over the menu and protested to the waiter at the deterioration of the food at this establishment, which he had been patronising for many years. He then settled down to a job of strong, silent eating in the manner of Charles Laughton in Henry VIII. Towards the end of our meal, Göring unfolded his vision of Germany's mission. He recited the plan for German aggression and grandeur, to be launched as soon as a rearmed Reich was again powerful enough to risk war.

"We shall march against France," he said, "and easily vanquish her. We shall regain our lost territories."

"How?" I asked.

"We shall conclude an alliance with Russia," Captain Göring went on, "and together with the Red Army, we shall crush France."

Did he feel any uneasiness, I asked, lest the Reich might slip into the position of Russia's junior partner in such a German-Soviet alliance? His reply disclosed that he had even then taken into account the factor of the Soviets' growing might. "As soon as we and the Russians have beaten France," he answered, "Germany will turn on the Red Army and annihilate it." Events nine years afterwards, as we now know, bore some resemblance to, but also some startling differences from Göring's prophecy.

A chance morsel of information which came my way at that time confirmed that Göring, the prophet, had been in deadly earnest. Among my Berlin acquaintances was Hans Wagner, a young Berlin industrialist, who owned a factory which manufactured mosaic tiles. A guest at dinner in our home one evening, Wagner indiscreetly told of an order Göring had just placed with Wagner's firm. The order was for a new map of Germany, to be made of glazed tiles and designed as an ornament for Göring's private house. The map, Wagner explained, put inside Germany's boundaries not only Alsace-Lorraine, but also big slices of land to the south and east of the Reich.

The restaurant chat with Göring recurred to me almost nine years later when a gasping world inhaled the news that Ribbentrop and Molotov, meeting in the Kremlin one night, had signed a pact of neutrality and friendship. Göring had guessed badly when he foretold a German-Soviet "alliance". On August 23rd, 1939, however, he and Hitler advanced a long distance towards accomplishing part of their programme by neutralising Russia. Hermann the Vermin, as he was already then privately known among American newspapermen in Berlin, wandered far astray in the main artery of his prediction. He entirely left out of sight the prospect that, when Germany would wheel and attack her Russian "partner," it might be the Red Army, in concert with the Western Allies, which would demolish German power.

I had first met Göring in June, 1928. He was then one of the tiny band of twelve Nazi deputies in the Reichstag's total membership of 491. As Berlin correspondent of the United Press of America, I was writing a report on the fate of Baron Manfred von Richthofen, flying ace of the first world war. When Richthofen's 'plane was shot down over the Western front and he crashed to death, it was Göring who was designated commander of the Richthofen squadron. Göring told me all he knew about the mystery of Richthofen's end.

As I was about to take leave from our table at a Kurfürstendamm café, Göring mentioned that he was engaged in manufacturing parachutes. Would I introduce him to the United States military attaché? To my inquiring glance, he replied that he wished to sell parachutes to the American Army. I said I was only a newspaper reporter and that he would have to look for another middleman.

We met several times. The last occasion was one night at the end of February, 1933. I was a guest at the home of friends, among whom the novelist, Heinrich Mann, was one. Our small company was listening to the nine o'clock news that evening when an excited German voice at the microphone announced that the Reichstag was burning. Snatching a hat and coat which I later discovered, by sheer accident, happened to be mine, I ran to the street, leapt into a taxi and shouted to the driver, "Reichstag—aber schnell!"

As we raced among trees and shadows of Berlin's Tiergarten, the sky was alight with flames pouring from the Reichstag's golden cupola. An immense crowd swarmed around the fringe of the Reichstag

Square, but police and Nazi militia had cordoned the square itself. I held forward my police card, a permit signed by the chief of police, allowing newspapermen to pass police lines. "Police cards are not valid to-night," a brown-shirted stormtrooper snapped. I whooshed past him to the door of the Reichstag. Inside, the building was a crackling furnace.

Göring was just arriving and, as a British journalist and I spoke to him, two brown-shirted guards poked revolvers into our ribs and commanded us to clear out and be quick about it. We walked back and joined the watching crowd. Later that evening, a trusted Social-Democratic leader, Rudolf Breitscheid, informed me that the Nazis themselves had managed the burning of the Reichstag and that the underground tunnel from Hermann Göring's official residence (Göring was president of the Reichstag) had been used to smuggle the incendiaries into the doomed Parliament building.

From the telephone in my office, Unter den Linden, I called London and spoke to Webb Miller, European manager of the United Press. In veiled words I told him that the Nazis had rigged this historic venture in arson. Like those of all other foreign news agencies and newspapers, United Press telephones in Berlin were tapped and my conversation with London was soon cut.

The last word I ever received from Göring came after I had left Berlin and was working in London. It was about two years after the Reichstag fire. Through the president of the United Press, Hugh Baillie, who had just visited him in Berlin, Göring sent me a message. "You are writing dispatches from London hostile to Nazi Germany," it said, "and this is to warn you that we know it and are watching you."

Had the Nazis won the war, others besides myself in this country would have had cause to know what Göring's amiable warnings meant. As it is, much though I dislike capital punishment, I am honestly glad that it is for Göring that fate has reserved a noose as a warning to all future conspirators who may be tempted to emulate him.

FREDERICK KUH

MR. QUEEN AND THE COAL QUOTA

THE blame for the non-arrival of our May to October coal quota (ordered over two months ago) cannot be laid entirely on backsliding Bevin boys, or absentee miners, or the closing down of pits. The fault is mainly our's in registering from ulterior motives with Mr. Queen to whom the selling of coal is a side-line. Instead of Mr. Queen's window displaying gilded bulb-bowls containing alluringly named Anthracite Ovoids, and selected Grade A specimens of Best Household Cobbles, and Best Household Nuts, it is stuffed with packets of fertilisers and insecticides, worm-powders and grass-seed, and posters for almost forgotten Lucullan brands of dog biscuits. The dog biscuit was one of the two reasons why we registered for coal with Mr. Queen. The other was eggs.

Mr. Queen is a Corn Merchant and Coal Agent. Because of the former he had contacts with the best dog biscuit manufacturers. Only from Mr. Queen could we be sure of getting biscuits in divers flavours and shapes, including imitation bones. Only from Mr. Queen could we buy new-laid eggs, so newly laid that the production dates were pencilled on them. These eggs, we think, must have been laid by Mr. Queen's backyard hens because even in pre-war days the supply did not equal the demand. To make sure of getting these coveted eggs and biscuits, therefore, we have, ever since we came to live in this suburb, bought our coal from Mr. Queen instead of from the real Coal Merchants by the station.

In pre-war days, delivery of coal was erratic. Now it is chaotic. Then, our delivery depended on the Man at the Off-License. Now it depends not only on him but also on Mr. Queen's horse and Mr. Queen's coalman's Chest (with a capital C). The Man at the Off-License is, apart from us, the only customer of Mr Queen's in our road. Mr. Queen's shop is a mile distant, and he likes to make the one journey "do" the Off-License and us. The reason is that to get to us the horse has to climb what Mr. Queen calls, in his most impressive Mount Everest manner, The Hill. To us, accustomed to Scottish braes, it is a mere wen. Mr. Queen, so far as his horse is concerned, is compassion personified. In very hot weather, in very wet weather, in very windy weather, in very slippery weather and, of course, in very snowy weather The Hill is out of bounds to his horse. To make sure of always having coal in his cellar, the Off-License man used to give Mr. Queen a regular monthly order for 5 cwts. The builder of our house, unlike the builder of the Off-License man's house, must have been in league with the local gas company because he provided us with no coal-cellar and only one coal fire. Our coal order was, therefore, a modest quarterly one. We knew, however, that if we did miss, say, the Off-License man's January order, delivery would be made to us with his February order. The hill and the horse permitting. If we did run out of coal, no matter. We could always buy from the hardware shop opposite a bag of something which looked like coke but burned better, or light the gas fire, which in those days blossomed into full-bloom crocuses of flame as soon as the light was applied.

Coal-rationing, of course, meant "Goodbye to all that." The hardware shop no longer sells combustible coke. The pressure of gas has often been so temperamental that the gas fire could be "full on" without generating any noticeable heat. The Off-License man receives deliveries only at widely spaced intervals, and if we fail to coincide with one of his orders now, we may have three months to wait before Mr. Queen can again fit us in. Is the non-arrival of our present quota due to the fact that the Off-License man ordered his coal only one week before ours'? Is it that the constant rain has been too much for Mr. Queen's horse in combination with The Hill? It may even be that Mr. Queen's coalman, because of the unseasonable summer, has already "got" his Chest which first began to trouble him in the Arctic winter of 1940 and is the reason why he now has to take great care of himself (synonymous with stopping work) as soon as he begins to wheeze. Mr. Queen has but one horse, and one coalman.

Twice we have telephoned Mr. Queen to ask if he knows when delivery is probable so that we can be in to show the coalman which bit of concrete path at the back of the house is to be used as a dump. Mr Queen, torn away from his bags of balancer meal and his packets of D.D.T., has curtly said "I'll give you a ring." We might, of course, ask the Off-License man when he plans to give his next order, but relations are strained because of our suspicions that he is guilty of Under the Counter practices. This fact remains, however. We have received no delivery of coal since last March, and our stock is very low. On the contrary, as far as we can see in either direction, concrete paths are piled high with May to October coal quotas. The reason is that our neighbours all registered with the coal merchant by the station. There is no hill to be negotiated from the station to our road. It would not matter if there were. That coal merchant, being a real Coal Merchant, has motor lorries and husky coalmen in the plural. Need I add that our original motives for registering with Mr. Queen have long since become meaningless? New-laid eggs vanished with the introduction of the rationing of hen-food, and we suspect that the raw material for the now unobtainable dog-biscuits goes into our B.U. austerity bread. While coal rationing lasts, we must remain loyal to our choice. Mr. Queen convinces us, however, that the concentration of industry, when those industries are corn and coal, is undesirable.

HELEN MACGREGOR

"OUR BETTERS"

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S comedy has two themes: first, the moral degeneration of American heiresses who, having from snobbery or romanticism married European noblemen, find themselves rootless and idle; second, the power of a clever woman to achieve even extravagant ends by knowledge of man's weaknesses. The final scene has for *deus ex machina* a dancing-master, which evidently dates the play. But is it otherwise "old-fashioned," as some of my fellow-critics would have us believe? For seven years, it is true, Europe has offered excessively little scope for the pursuit of pleasure; moreover, no film-goer can now swallow Mr. Somerset Maugham's tongue-in-the-cheek suggestion that the rich are less liable to be corrupted in the United States than in Europe. But the chief situations remain valid. And if the visitor to the Playhouse goes away disappointed, this is not because the play is old-fashioned, but because the acting and production are new-fashioned, catastrophically so.

The dialogue does not seem in the least dated when Miss Cathleen Nesbitt and Mr. Max Adrian are speaking it. These are flawless performances. But the others! Line after brilliant line is thrown away in interchanges at machine-gun speed, till the stage is littered with the débris. One remembers Miss Margaret Bannerman as tough and gleaming as electro-plate, a Bismarck pretending to be an *enfant terrible*; and Miss Constance Collier, as sumptuous and soft at the centre as an over-ripe persimmon. Their successors—both of them most accomplished actresses whom I have admired in appropriate roles seemed pitiably at sea. Even the varnish of cool assurance that rich women so quickly pick up at the Ritzes and Excelsiors was absent. Get Lord Curzon or Mr. Balfour to dinner? You mean, with luck, the Mayor of Huddersfield! Really it is unkind to produce artificial comedies like *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *Our Betters* as if they were the latest masterpieces of Mesdames McCracken and Dodie Smith. A duchess may have precious little style in real life, but Oscar Wilde and Mr. Maugham impose style even on their lackeys.

Yet the play at the Playhouse is better than what we enjoyed so acutely twenty three years ago. For then we were asked to believe that a fashionable young man who caught his hostess *in flagrante delicto* would innocently blurt out the horrid fact to the assembled house-party. Now it is the culprit's young sister who, not impossibly, loses her head and blows the gaff. This striking change for the better is due to the second thoughts not of Mr. Maugham but of the Censor, who this time has passed the original text. And yet some people say they don't believe in progress. . .

SAM SMILES

AN INSPECTOR CALLS

IT was a shock, after enjoying the play at the New Theatre up to the hilt, to find that I ought not to have been so pleased with it after all. A friend told me it was all politics, a critic that Ralph Richardson was the mouthpiece of the author, somebody else that it was a pity that for this occasion Mr. Priestley had changed down to low gear and was grinding away again in the north country accent. It was Doctor Johnson himself who said that it is impossible to write poetically of serges and druggets. But surely it was wise of Mr. Priestley, standing as he does here in the stupendous context of Shakespeare and Sophocles, to keep this side of Jordan, and give us a simple and straightforward example of the beautiful craftsmanship that, in hands like his, the contemporary dramatist can offer. And surely it was the critic, and not Mr. Priestley, who was being politically minded when he dissected the play in the brutal modern manner, by splitting it into Left and Right.

Sentiments are expressed, it is true. One by one members of a family are made to realise that they have been responsible for the death, by suicide, of a member of their own community. Not even inter-dependent independence can make sufficient allowance for the less fortunate. By setting the play very precisely in the early Nineteen-Tens (with Basil Dean producing in his best realistic vein) the contemporary moral is kept at a distance. On the wall-

paper, prophetically coloured dark red with the congealed blood of future wars, the pictures of well-fed cattle peer symbolically through mists. In Act 1 the dining room table fills the stage. In the rest of the play, when the interest centres on another part of the room, the table is set back, and a hideous fire-place emerges into view. Otherwise the set, and the *dramatis personæ*, remain unaltered. And the play holds us completely—indeed at the end of the second act the characters are tied so immovably into their strait jackets that there seems to be nothing more to be done. Nevertheless in Act III the cords are unpicked one by one, only to be crushed together again in one suffocating grip by the best *coup de théâtre* of the year.

The play is acted with equal precision and professional grace. Mr. Richardson, as the mysterious inspector, somehow suggests the unearthly by his very ordinariness, *lucus a non lucendo*. Only the character of the remorseless father is drawn flatter than life, so that we expect, in the programme, to find him personified under some such name as Tycoonus, if not Share-do-well, or Mr. Busyman Hardhead.

STEPHEN POTTER

PICTURES

THE Redfern Gallery has a posthumous show of work by another Camden Towner, Malcolm Drummond, which invites comparison with Mr. Ratcliffe's exhibition next door. Drummond is the more enterprising and the less regularly successful. Some of his subjects were beyond his power to transmute, and the ugliness of the room in which a man reads or a girl plays the piano remains ugliness. But the painting of a dismal dance-hall is a striking and most difficult victory. *Roofs and Trees, Hampstead* (No. 16) is a delightful picture, and there are excellent studies of light falling on women and children. It is the colour that sometimes fails, or else the pattern becomes too posterish. The workmanship is always good. In the same gallery a collection of etchings, pochoirs, aquatints and collotypes by Picasso reveals the great man at his most charming.

At Wildenstein's Sir Harold Wernher is showing the collection formed by his father. This is in aid of the King Edward VII's Hospital Fund, which—it is interesting to learn—is to be devoted to increasing the amenities in hospital wards, as soon as the State has taken over the hospitals. This excellent object cannot conceal the fact that the interest of the exhibition is rather historical than aesthetic. The pictures display the taste of an Edwardian Midas, and one would like to have seen them in the doubtless gorgeous setting for which they were purchased. The Altdorfer is remarkable, the Spanish Primitive (now lent to the important Spanish loan exhibition that is touring the provincial museums) is superb. Otherwise hardly a work has any intensity, though some of the attributions to great artists are justified. The only time, we are told, that Sir Julius Wernher could devote to his collection was at breakfast. But only the influence of a regal dinner and a Moët 1884, I should have thought, could have made him cast a covetous, or even acquiescent, eye at the Goya, the Botticelli, the large Gurdia, or any of the three Rembrandts.

ROGER MARVELL

RADIO NOTES

THE directors of the Third Programme evidently decided that it was best to take the bull by the horns from the word go. The listener was to be subjected to a week of tests—tests of endurance (*Man and Superman*), of squeamishness (*Huis Clos*), of attention (*Boyhood's End*) and the descriptive prose of Henry James. It would be interesting to know what proportion of listeners was delighted by the verbal dexterity of the Shaw play, while finding the claustrophobic philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre unacceptable and disgusting; and what proportion, on the other hand, responded to the relentless psychological penetration of *Huis Clos* while finding the plot and characters of *Man and Superman* insufficient to support the immense superstructure of argle-bargle. Speaking personally, and after paying tribute to the evident pains which had gone into the production of *Man and Superman*, I could not feel that on the whole the acting was stylish enough to carry the burden of so long and elaborate a *jeu d'esprit*. Even if anyone can still put up with the vitalist philosophy, the eugenics, the paradoxical attitude to love and art, he must, I should think, have found their expounders on this occasion rather lacking in conviction. A narrator who, despite an inexorably "bright" tone, made the stage directions seem even longer than they are (and they were cut); an Octavius Robinson for ever trembling on the brink of audibility; a Roebuck Ramsden who never rose above the level of stagy pomposity: these were drawbacks which not even the virtuosity of Esmé Percy and the sincerity of Grizelda Hervey could do much to mitigate. Sebastian Shaw's ringing voice did convey an impression of vitality and sex appeal; but this actor hardly has the guns for so long a part. As for Miss Hervey, we all know her as a more than competent radio actress; but, faced with the impossible task of making roguishness seem attractive, she can hardly be blamed for failing to make a credible figure out of the dreadful Ann. All the same, an occasional revival of this planturous comedy imposes itself as a duty, and of this occasion we shall remember with gratitude Esmé Percy's wonderful vocalisation of the lines to Louisa, as well as some brilliant moments in the Hell scene. But why were the musical quotations from *Don Giovanni* so faint, especially where the text mentions "two great chords rolling on syncopated waves of sound"?

Mr. Austin Gill, whose introductory remarks on Existentialism were the most lucid exposé of that pretentious pseudo-philosophy I have yet come across, wisely made no claim for *Huis Clos*, either as drama or as metaphysics. He merely described, leaving us to draw our own conclusions from a comparison of the Frenchman's Hell with the Irishman's. Mr. Shaw sees Hell as the infinite pursuit of illusory goods; and the discussion of it, in Act 3 of *Man and Superman*, is fundamentally too good-humoured and jocular to be in the least frightening. There is no real suggestion of the nature of immortality here—only a series of ingenious hypotheses, which can be entertained or rejected, as we feel inclined. But there is no rejecting M. Sartre's vision, because it shows us life at its worst and manages at the same time (here the dramatist's skill is enviable) to suggest the nauseating tedium of an eternity of time. Heaven, implies Mr. Shaw, is timeless contemplation; in Hell, says M. Sartre, the leaden minutes spell out an obdurate palindrome, of which each note is agonisingly foreseen. This Hell is only worse than life because there is not a moment's escape from chewing the cud of one's own wretchedness—not even (and this is very bad) into sleep or darkness or a meal or a hot bath. It is tragedy without catharsis—and so is *Huis Clos*, which explains why this dry and remorseless play, for all its brilliance and originality, fails to achieve greatness. But if Existentialism is untenable as a philosophy, as an artistic formula it can be most effective: *Huis Clos* shocks and terrifies by its Strindbergian examination of the depths of sin and misery. How anyone could be *bored* by it passes my comprehension. In a sense not intended by the author, it is a very strong plea for the Christian life. Also, it is perfectly appalling; which is one reason why the B.B.C. are to be congratulated on their courage in broadcasting it, in full awareness of the anger and dismay it would cause among people who may be able to face the immitigable in life, but cannot bear to meet it in art. I had feared that *Huis Clos* would lose much of its poignancy through the disappearance of the visual scene; but the acting was so good, so admirably characterised, and the production so careful, that I am not sure there was not a positive imaginative gain.

Those who listened to the passing of the sentences at Nuremberg are unlikely ever to forget the experience. The exemplary gravity and simplicity of the proceedings were rendered grotesque and macabre, in transmission, by the most extraordinary series of aerial commotions I have ever heard—a background of noise like a *Walpurgisnacht* by Hieronymus Bosch. And as, one by one, the soundless masks of the criminals waxed and waned in our mind's eye, we caught a glimpse—in reality this time—of the hell that springs into being from the knowledge of a dated and irrevocable death.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"The Overlanders," at the Leicester Square

When, last week, I wrote of a new film, *Farrebique, ou les quatre saisons*, that it was the first considerable documentary to be made in France, my memory had not reached back quite far enough. There was, of course, twenty years earlier, Cavalcanti's impressionist reporting of a Paris day—*Rien que les heures*. So far as the French cinema was concerned it remained an isolated experiment: the only book I possess on the subject describes it as "privé à un point incroyable de vie et d'humanité." That comment may seem, just as incredibly, to miss the point, but perhaps it is characteristically French. At any rate, documentary never took root in France (nor did Flaherty make more impression on Hollywood): Cavalcanti came here instead and found in Grierson an ideal and already powerful collaborator. One provided the sensibilities, the other the backbone, of a method. Their influence can be felt strongly today in such films as *The Overlanders*: serious films that explore rather than invent, often beautiful, often exciting, and sometimes also a trifle stolid. Film-making of this order does not, because it mirrors life, necessarily precludes imagination, but that is its tendency.

The Overlanders creates no new standards, but none the less it is a fine film. Mr. Harry Watt (who began, by the way, as assistant to Flaherty on *Man of Aran*) went to Australia three years ago with the commission to make a film. He followed the Grierson prescription of looking for your story instead of imposing it; found it in the great cattle migration of 1942. That year, under threat of invasion, a thousand head of cattle were driven from the north-west across desert and mountain to Brisbane: a distance of 2,000 miles. A handful of men and women undertook this trek; it was late in the summer for journeying; the horses ate poison weed and died; some of the water-holes had dried up, others turned to bog; there were rivers to be forded, heats to be endured, narrow passes threaded, and unavoidable stampedes; yet without loss of life and with the herd almost intact they managed to get through. A magnificent story; and Mr. Watt set about it thoroughly, choosing Australians for his cast and manoeuvring a vast herd over the original ground. The landscape dominates everything; tall gum-trees filtering the sunlight, crocodile-infested waters, plains of desert scrub succeeded by mountain cliffs; at one point, a couple of aborigines look down on the convoy in the valley. Set this panorama beside the studio-inspired Africa of the recent *Men of Two Worlds*, and there can be no doubt which method triumphs.

The excitements of the journey have been most vigorously managed. There is an appalling moment when the leaders of the herd, meeting a fallen tree-trunk across a narrow pass, begin to turn back, and animals crash down the mountain-side; even more actual and compelling is the stampede of the whole herd through woods towards a bog. The latter, especially—the climax of the film—so stirs the spectator that it may seem hypercritical to pick holes. Yet even here, I think, one can detect the film's limitations: the stampede itself, though rather prolonged, could hardly be better; but the shots leading to it—the arrival of the breeze over the resting cattle, bringing the smell of water—lack the accumulating rhythm which a Russian director would certainly have developed. Still, that's asking for the touch of an Eisenstein or a Pudovkin. More reasonably we may complain that all through this journey, despite its terrible and spectacular moments, we just miss the continuity and stress in the people themselves. They are true to type, they bring a fresh tang of speech with their "pickaninny dawn" and "we'll have 'em climbing ladders before we're done," they certainly aren't over-romanticised; yet, except when they are riding and ha-ha-ing at the cattle, one can't forget that these are people acting in front of a camera—acting at times a little woodenly. This censure does not apply to Mr. Chips Rafferty, who conveys unfailingly a native lankiness and charm. The script makes its points well, but is generous chiefly in banter. It lacks the imagination that would transform a film with a magnificent theme into a magnificent film.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

THE LESSON OF NUREMBERG

SIR,—The widespread resentment about the acquittal of Papen and Schacht, which has been allowed to express itself in parts of occupied Germany, was more than an outburst of indignation against two grave-diggers of the feeble Weimar Republic. It appeared to be in the first place an expression of protest against the limited charter of the International Court and against an alleged leniency towards ex-Nazis and their backers who are still in economic and administrative key positions.

Many of the torch-bearers of present political opinion in Germany have been persecuted by Nazism at a time when Hitler signed treaties with the Vatican and States which he already planned to attack at a later stage. They wanted to see the Nazi leaders indicted for their crimes against humanity, and they have not forgotten that these crimes started in the early thirties and that the first victims were those Germans who opposed the Nazi avalanche. The Nuremberg Counts I and IV included such an indictment and there were some occasional remarks by the leading prosecutors on this principle line. The reports in the Allied-controlled German Press and broadcasts, however, made it appear that condemnation of crimes against German human beings was only of a very occasional nature. The acquittal of the very Papen who unleashed the first full-scale terror wave against the German Left and liberal organisations, and of the very Schacht who deliberately strangled democratic local government up to 1931 and who did so much to win German and foreign big business backing for Hitler in the decisive years 1931 and 1932 must therefore, have appeared to many Germans as a confirmation to the vague impression that Nazi crimes against Germans did not mean very much to the International Tribunal.

At the same time the widespread opposition against the practice of keeping ex-Nazis and former Nazi backers in economic and administrative key positions, while the small fry are punished, objected to the apparent exoneration of the three guilty men.

In all countries political demonstrations assume sometimes a queer form under military government. The fact, however, that it came to these protests in defence of the principles of humanity and equality before the law seems to be most encouraging.

WALTER AUERBACH

23 Church Mount, N.2.

POST FACTUM LAW

SIR,—To me, as a lawyer interested in the development and enforcement of International Law, the value of your comment on the trials is marred by your reference to "the dubious legality of trying men under a law passed subsequent to the commission of their crimes." That such a view is possible is shown by the fact that it was strongly urged by some of the German advocates, but it is in my opinion quite misleading to speak of it as though it were an agreed point among all people of discernment. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that the Charter under which the prisoners were tried did not establish any new crimes, or make any acts criminal which previously had been lawful. All it did was to set up a Court for dealing with grave breaches of pre-existing Law. As was said by Sir Hartley Shawcross, K.C. "The only innovation which this Charter has introduced is to provide machinery, long overdue, to carry out the existing law, and there is no substance in the complaint that the Charter is a piece of *post factum* legislation either in declaring wars of aggression to be criminal, or in assuming that the State is not immune from criminal responsibility."

Similar statements were repeatedly made by the United States, French and Soviet prosecutors, and were affirmed by the judgment of Lord Justice Lawrence. The question is, of course, extremely important, and it is highly desirable that it should be widely understood that these were not new crimes concocted after the event. Naturally, there is nothing to stop anyone from continuing to believe that aggressive war was not a crime, and that it was perfectly lawful to murder Jews and prisoners, but it should not be thought that such views agree with those held by lawyers who are well acquainted with the law which existed before 1939. Aggressive War has been a crime since the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, and mass slaughters and atrocities were condemned as criminal for many years prior to 1928. All that the Tribunal has done is to enforce Law which should have been enforced previously.

Woodland House, Prestatyn, Flints. HECTOR MUNRO

OUR TASK IN GERMANY

SIR,—It is now officially stated that the normal ration in ours and the American Zones is to be raised from the 1207 level to 1550. This has been prompted by "deterioration in the nutritional condition of civilians" in these Zones—in simpler language by the evils of famine. These evils were inevitable, could have been foreseen, and some of us believe could have been prevented. We all know (if we want to know) that 2650 calories is the minimum required for health and working power.

I would like to challenge our authorities concerned. Have there been, are there now, will there not be further food supplies available? Does the real difficulty lie in our unwillingness to increase the £80,000,000 budget for our zone?

Further, can our authorities deny that German industry could produce exports to pay for more food if Germans were allowed to resume normal human activities and to help themselves?

We swear by Democracy. But in this case is it working? We have assumed entire responsibility for the fate of 23 million individuals—old people, workers, parents, youths and girls, children and infants. We hold the gates of Heaven and Hell; we decide for them whether "to live is happy," or whether it shall mean the hell of famine, of cold, of disease, of misery unrelieved by any hope. In fact, we have made ourselves the dispensers of life and death.

But who are our agents in the exercise of these god-like functions? Have they the needful qualifications? Is it the fact that only a small minority of electors take any close interest in this fateful question? If in the name of our Democracy the policy is continued of neither feeding nor housing the German millions as well as in reality it is possible (at a price), nor of allowing them to see to it for themselves, then Democracy has failed signally and is preparing for its own destruction. We know already that anti-British feeling is growing in our zone *pari passu* with hunger and its train of evils.

The atom bomb frightens us. Why are we not frightened by the vast explosive and desolating force engendered in the souls of men when they are forced to suffer too much and too long, and to watch their children perish? DOROTHY F. BUXTON

Whingate, Peaslake, Surrey.

THE ILLEGAL OPERATION

SIR,—The article headed "Illegal Operation" in your issue of September 28th requires comment.

The authoress of the article, writing of that Law (passed in 1861) which is relevant to abortion, states that it was framed "maybe centuries before 1861." Will she tell us the authorities who observed this prolonged gestation?

In her penultimate sentence she suggests that abortion should become legally permissible for a woman on occasions "when this procedure appears to be medically or socially desirable either in her own interest or in that of the community." This is a very

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JONATHAN CAPE

fecund lump of verbiage. Indeed that "interest . . . of the community" alone is teeming with possible occasions—occasions which might not always be agreeable to the mothers for whom they would be devised.

Her opinion of the value of this legal change may be deduced from two other of her remarks. She writes that the present law is "the supreme example of 'one law for the rich and another for the poor,'" and, by presumption, should be altered so that, when the National Health Service is upon us, the poor may have themselves aborted as hygienically as the rich. Earlier she describes these rich abortees as "enlightened women with long purses." Assuming enlightenment of the masses to be desirable, one infers that widespread, cleanly abortion will be one of its signs manual.

If she had advocated a liberal interpretation of the principle that pregnancy may be terminated when there is grave risk of serious mental or physical injury to the mother from its continuance, she would have the sympathy of many, if not their support. But she does not: she suggests instead that the present wholesale massacre of the unborn should continue and perhaps be extended. An aseptic massacre? An enlightened one? I find it hard to understand how any woman can harbour such sentiments.

Does she not realise that the main causes of that massacre are poverty, illegitimacy of the prospective child, marital discord and—in the rich—a sick mind that spews up the duty and delight of procreating? I suggest most humbly that her talent should be used to destroy or remedy these evils: the law she advocates would tacitly admit them to be ineradicable cancers in our social life.

It was Arthur Koestler, I think, who, in a recent broadcast, identified the malady of our time as the practice and defence of the "end justifies the means" fallacy in our moral life. Miss Jenkins is sick of that disease. So, too, from their fine words, were those who defended Hiroshima.

S. BRADSHAW

SIR,—While agreeing entirely with Alice Jenkins about the need to amend the present out-of-date law of abortion, I feel I must refute her suggestion that a long purse only can command the service of a reputable gynaecologist for the necessary operation. The law needs altering chiefly because it is no longer observed as it stands.

Speaking from many years of professional experience I can say that it is now common medical practice for general practitioners (unless they have personal or religious scruples), to send all married women whose health would be gravely injured by continuing a pregnancy, and all girls, whether under or over the age of consent, who have indubitably suffered rape, to hospital out-patient clinics, where the honorary gynaecologist, with few exceptions, puts them down for admission through the usual channels and quite openly. Sterilisation is carried out in married women, with the consent of all parties concerned, where further child-bearing is considered inadvisable on grounds of health.

It is only the wealthy frail who score over their poorer sisters in escaping the consequences of their carelessness, and I do not see how this will ever be altered while money can command those whom money rules.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

KLUANG COURT MARTIAL

SIR,—Very severe sentences have now been promulgated by the court-martial at Kluang on most of the men charged with mutiny. These men were expressing something which has been felt by the great majority of wartime privates, most N.C.O.s, and a substantial proportion of the whole Army. The grievances at Muar were a great deal worse in kind and number than the general run. All the same there is something depressingly familiar about the touches in newspaper reports, touches which suggest a whole picture of the camp: the provocation of dirtying webbing equipment every day on training, and then insisting on it being clean for daily inspection; the attempt, whenever there is no immediate prospect of action, to make a gulf between N.C.O.s and men, which leads to voluntary reversions to the ranks, in particular amongst those N.C.O.s promoted in the field; and the attitude of an R.S.M. who gives the fact that he did not expect the men to love him as an adequate explanation of why they hid at his approach. This sort of thing, a cause of chronic resentment to ordinary soldiers, was possibly even more exasperating to the men at Muar, all of them, I imagine, volunteers for specially dangerous duties, and some at least having been in action. That most of us never made so drastic a protest was either because we lacked the same accumulated provocation or because of our own inertia or fear of the consequences. The average private would be sceptical of the effectiveness of a protest of any other kind.

6 Alexandra Mansions, N.W.6. H. MYERS

THE CO-OPS AND DESIGN

SIR,—Mr. Raymond Mortimer's appeal to the Co-operative Wholesale Society to use their vast powers to improve public taste is one which many of us have tried to make for years. The Society has an educational section which appears to have no influence whatever over the commercial activities. However favourable educationalists in the movement are, they are powerless to change carpet designs (the Society has one of the largest carpet factories in the country), china, furniture or any of the other products sold. I can assure Mr. Mortimer that the British Industries Fair was only a larger version of the chamber of horrors presented at the annual conference of the Co-op. Truth to tell, good design needs a certain amount of dictatorship and is unlikely to emerge unless good designers are given full and free authority. It cannot be expected to appear in the Co-op. as at present constituted.

44 Malvern Court, S.W.1. H. LOWENTHAL

GWEN JOHN

SIR,—In his notes on the Gwen John Memorial Exhibition, Mr. Roger Marvell expresses astonishment that her output of oil paintings should have been so small.

I knew Gwen John in 1924 when she was living in an attic room at Meudon. She told me then that she preferred never to touch the canvas twice in the same place—that if a picture didn't "come" at the first go, she destroyed it and began another. Freshness of paint was for her a supreme virtue, and in this respect her view coincided with the teaching of the late Walter Sickert. Thus, for one painting retained, many were scrapped, and the result was a very limited output.

I have not yet seen the present Exhibition—I do not know if she followed this technique all her life.

At the time when I knew her she was living as a fiercely shy recluse, painting with complete artistic integrity and with no reference to public opinion.

57 Danvers Street, Chelsea, S.W.3. STELLA BOWEN

BEFORE I GO HENCE

SIR,—In Mr. Heppenstall's pungent notice of my novel "Before I Go Hence" there is an error. He refers to the novelist in the book as an "Anglo-Catholic pacifist." He is, actually, a Roman Catholic pacifist, a fact which is made clear throughout the book.

Although this distinction may appear at first sight to be trivial, it is of considerable importance in the scheme of the book. I would be most grateful, therefore, if you will allow me space in which to correct your reviewer's error.

26 Cliff Street, Mevagissey. FRANK BAKER

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

For four hundred years Portugal has not, so far as I know, produced a single writer, artist or scientist whose name is widely known in the Western Europe of which she is geographically a part. This may prove nothing but our ignorance: Garrett, Herculano and Martins, for instance, may be eminently worth knowing, just as Pombal seems to have been a statesman of uncommon parts. But nobody will deny that Portugal has suffered a conspicuous decline since the times of Vasco da Gama and Camoens. Hot Protestants blame this upon the despotism of the Church, but the philosopher will have noticed how readily Catholicism takes a colour from the peoples and climates wherein it prevails, intellectual in France, obscurantist in Spain, breezy in the United States, Calvinistically puritan in Ireland, indulgently pagan in the Two Sicilies. Devotees of racial purity, on the other hand, attribute the decline of the Portuguese genius to the lavish admixture of Negro blood. Probably no single cause but an unhappy concatenation must be held responsible. Hitherto the Portuguese have shown themselves peculiarly ungifted for politics: in no country has parliamentary government proved a more conspicuous failure. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that Portugal has no interesting future. In Brazil, moreover, the old national genius is revealing itself in increasingly promising and varied forms.

From a visitor so exceptionally shrewd and unprejudiced as Miss Rose Macaulay we could expect much light upon the Portuguese enigma, but in *They Went to Portugal* (*Cape* 18s.) she offers us over four hundred pages without allowing herself one comment upon the character of its inhabitants. We see them only through the eyes, too usually insular and complacent, of English visitors. She portrays a selection of these, beginning with the predaceous Crusaders of the Twelfth Century and ending with Tennyson who, like most Victorians, failed to adapt himself to the delights, that we have since learnt to appreciate, of a Southern summer. While Miss Macaulay has arranged her visitors according to their business (writers, clergymen, tourists, etc.) instead of chronologically, she does begin with the Crusaders; and ecclesiologists will be interested to learn that the Sarum rite, imported in the Twelfth Century by Gilbert of Hastings, who became Bishop of Lisbon, persisted there for four hundred years. The cathedral that he helped to build survived the great earthquake and displays the Norman version of romanesque. Even more surprising to the English visitor is the fan-vaulting of Belem: the influence of our Perpendicular in Portugal deserves study. Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt, married King John I, and he employed an English architect upon the abbey of Batalha where with his wife he lies buried. One of their children was the justly famous Henry the Navigator, and his seamanship is attributed to his English blood by those patriotic enough both to persuade themselves that the Plantagenets were English and to forget that his navigating was only vicarious.

Miss Macaulay's portraiture is no less sympathetic than incisive, whether her sitter is a diplomatist, a trader, a poet or an admiral. It is perhaps in the presentation of ecclesiastics that she excels herself. The highest comedy requires a shadow of pathos to set off its glitter, and there is something touching as well as droll in the bewilderment to which the most self-satisfied Protestants succumbed in face of a Christianity so unlike their own. A Jacobean Jesuit infuriates our consul by the assiduity with which he converts his fellow-countrymen. A Tractarian hymn-writer argues about Anglican orders in the intervals of looting manuscripts from monasteries. The Rev. John Colbatch, whom we know only as the frantic adversary of Bentley, conducts an earlier campaign against Mr. John Methuen, the British envoy.

> His quarrels and grievances he related to his patron Bishop Burnet of Salisbury in one of the longest, wordiest and most pained epistles that can ever have been inflicted on those tough, enduring, seasoned prelates, the bishops of the Christian churches.

The great Lisbon earthquake of 1756 (which withered the facile optimism of contemporary philosophers—*Candide* was one of its results), is described by an English Bridgettine; and we notice how similar are the consequences of an earthquake and of an air-raid. A colporteur of Bibles harangues the citizens of Evora, and though he calls the Pope the head minister of Satan meets with no answering abuse. (This is attributed by Borrow to his "utter fearlessness", by Miss Macaulay, more plausibly, to the incomprehensibility of his Portuguese.)

Then Byron saunters by, neatly silhouetted as a "dissolute prig"; Southey, too, indignant with, because excluded from, the "gay, luxurious, derisive and self-sufficient clique that the English upper class contrive to form wherever they sojourn." (These happy epithets, need I say, are Miss Macaulay's, not poor Southey's.) Then we are given a peep at Lady Craven, styling herself Margravine of Anspach, a glorious goose whose memoirs can be commended to everyone who is amused by sedulity in self-praise. The most elaborate of Miss Macaulay's characters is that devoted to Beckford, the aesthete enraptured by the scenery and social gaieties of Portugal no less than by its alluring young persons. With the Marquis of Marialva and his children Beckford rapidly became familiar.

> Night approached; lights glimmered from every part of "the strange huddle of buildings of which this morisco-looking palace is composed; half the family were engaged in reciting the litanies of saints, the other in freaks and frolics, perhaps of no very edifying nature," and all to the monotonous staccato of the guitar and the soothing murmur of modinhas. Then came a glare of flambeaux and a splashing and dashing of water, and back from across the Tagus arrived the old marquis and his son in a scalera, with "a procession hardly equalled since the days of Noah"; they had been on a pilgrimage to "some saint's nest or other on the opposite shore." Beckford watched the landing entranced; the procession was led by a hump-backed dwarf blowing a trumpet; there followed some shady military officers, a savage-looking monk and two friars, an apothecary in sables, a half-crazed improvisatore spouting verse, and a confused rabble of watermen and servants with bird-cages, lanterns, baskets of fruit, and a bevy of lovely children with wings on their shoulders, for with these little innocents, thus got up as angels, the old marquis loved to surround himself. It was a typical Marialva outing and assembly.

This spectacle, from which Mr. Ashton might derive inspiration for a ballet, was vastly congenial to Beckford. Miss Macaulay ingeniously suggests that, though he made his last visit to Portugal in 1799, in a sense he never left it.

> Fonthill, and the Fonthill life, that so amazed, mystified, fascinated and scandalized the neighbours through so many eras, with its grandiose luxury, its dwarfs, its troupes of exotic musicians, its rich banquets, its ceremonious pomp, its curios, beauties and extravagancies collected from all parts of the world, its patriarchal armies of retainers, its gourmandizing off rich plate to the accompaniment of elaborate orchestral performances, derived from an imagination which had found in the Portugal of Maria I, of the rich eighteenth-century fidalgos and prelates, of the feudal Marialva and his friends, its home. The fabulous, crazy loveliness of that lotus-eating, comic-opera, devout, ridiculous, moonish world has evoked in him a response at first delightedly (however cynically) amused and charmed, later ennuyé, bored, but still willing to be pleased, and always sensuously enchanted by its bizarre beauty and unconscious wit.

Miss Macaulay gives a most interesting section to the civil war of 1832-1834 which divided English opinion and which was eventually won with English help by the progressive Don Pedro. The reasons for detesting his adversary could hardly have been more solid, but unluckily Miguel's defeat and disappearance led to no very noticeable improvement. The British envoy was Lord William Russell, a Whig even more opposed to tyranny, and specially to tyranny based upon "Popish superstition," than his brother, Lord John. But his prognostics were gloomy and in due course justified by the event; "One Party proclaims Religion as its device, and outrages all its precepts, the other invokes Liberty, and all its acts are despotic." But nothing is more constant than the English belief that countries which have never known good government, much less good democratic government, are able, and even anxious, to acquire that tolerance, not unmixed with a good-natured scepticism, without which every government must become a tyranny.

Another remarkable chapter is given to the port-shippers, who have been established in the North of Portugal since the Seventeenth Century. Their high prosperity dates from the Methuen Treaty of 1703 which made port cheaper than claret and thus inflicted untold damage on the digestions and tempers of our Georgian ancestors.

> Insular by tradition and taste, they consort mainly with one another, and the hierarchy of status within their close society suggests that of an English country town. This genial unconsciously arrogant Britishness, easy, hospitable, lavish, Protestant, assured, descending from generation with the historic continuity of the great port houses, has a not uncharming piquancy, when set in the precipitous ancient capital of Northern Portugal, teeming with its native life, against the background of the distant mountainy vineyards up the golden river which provide their so romantic sustenance.

Desire for profit and pursuit of health—Portugal was for long mistakenly thought favourable to consumptives—were the two most usual motives of English visitors to Portugal. But the poet Flecknoe, "spitefully made by Dryden the father-in-dullness of his *bête noire* Thomas Shadwell," left England in 1640 for other reasons.

> Here are divers Birds that fly away when Storms and Winter comes, one of those birds am I, for all prognostic Mariners observe of ensuing Storms, and I have observed in England the billows beginning to swell high, and those Porpoises which, were the times fair and serene, should be i'th' Bottom, dancing on the Top. Meantime, let your vast and strong-built Carracks ride out the storm for me; I'm too weak and slight-built a vessel for tempestuous Seas. Besides educated as I am in the Arts of Peace (Music and Poetry) . . . England is no place for me. And this much for my leaving it. Now for my retreat hither, 'twas altogether much without design. I, like one who flies an *Incendium*, wholly indifferent whither I went, so I sav'd myself.

Flecknoe's candour is endearing; nor did he ever go so far as preach from the security of self-imposed exile a religion of self-abnegation to his war-wracked compatriots. But a comparable lack of humour is revealed in a letter to a noble friend, in which he enclosed an epitaph upon the executed Strafford: "And now (my Lord)" he wrote, "comfort yourself, if you chance to be the next, that you shall not want one to make your Epitaph and Character at the least." Flecknoe himself, well away from the *Incendium*, was feasting upon "figs that make beccaficos of men, and meloons both red and green, beyond their marmalade for meltingness." Such language is one more instance of the genial effect of expatriation, so it be to Europe, upon English character and style.

Magpie-like I have stolen from Miss Macaulay's beautifully ordered treasury a few glittering baubles, but alas I have failed to give any notion of the craftsmanship, the learning, the nicety of language, above all the trenchant wisdom conspicuous throughout her book. It leaves me longing to read the experience of one more visitor to Portugal, herself; longing also to see again with my own eyes the harbour women with fish upon their heads climbing the steep Lisbon alleys under the Judas trees and the wistarias, to eat "meloons" below the painted Empire architecture of the Squares, to rediscover the Cendrillon rococo of Queluz, and to contemplate the white Atlantic clouds rolling over a landscape of watered silk more delicately green than any other in Southern Europe.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

CAN ANY GOOD THING COME OUT OF NAZARETH?

The German Mentality. By VERRINA. *George Allen and Unwin.* 16*s.*

Pens under the Swastika. By W. W. SCHÜTZ. *S.C.M. Press.* 5*s.*

The problem of how to treat Germany is so complicated that a kind of mental paralysis seems to seize some of those who discuss it. We dug ourselves in so deep during the war that we find it difficult now to change our stance and look at Germany in a new way. The author of *The German Mentality*, who has lived for more than fifty years in Germany, is faced with a dilemma on concluding his study. He has not been content to make a psychological analysis of the German mind; he does not explore the intricacies of their psychology, their search for the ideal and their preoccupation with the ego, nor does he stress how subject the German temperament is to neuroses, which incidentally add a special fascination to German literature. He does not possess the insight shown by Army psychiatrists in their work with German prisoners of war. Nor is his book a companion volume to A. J. P. Taylor's short history of the causes of German nationalism and aggression. The author does not seek to outline the historical, or even the geographical facts which have conditioned the German mind; and while he naturally refers to the effect of the events of the last fifty years on the German outlook, he prefers to study German mentality *in vacuo* rather than in relation to that of other European countries. He shows how in every walk of life, in politics, justice, in their attitude to the arts, in social and economic development, the Germans were predisposed by their singular mentality to accept Nazism; he argues that Jew-baiting and the methods of the Gestapo were ingrained in their character and that their conception of national and personal honour permitted Hitler to carry the nation with him. In his analysis the author does a particular service in concentrating his attention on the years 1933-37 when, as he points out, the majority of Germans either supported or willingly acquiesced in the revival of aggressive nationalism and militarism. Many of the classes or groups who now claim to have been anti-Nazi, for example some of the cells in the July 1944 plot, became anti-Nazi only when they at last realised that Nazism meant war, or became fully aware of the atrocities, or in the last resort saw that it did not pay. This does not, however, prevent him from praising those who suffered for their resistance in concentration camps or in exile. His book is therefore not an academic divertisement but is intended to be a sober study to help those who are administering Germany today. It is precisely because he intends his book to be of practical value that the author finds himself in a dilemma. Having exhausted the perversity of the German mind, he feels in honour bound to add a final chapter explaining how, in spite of all he has said, Germany may be re-educated and become a peaceful and sane nation. This last chapter is most unnourishing; like sheep we look up and we are not fed. If one is going to make policy for the future, one must change one's past stance. The first twelve chapters iu this book would have led satisfactorily enough to the conclusion, had they been written in 1938, that Germany was a menace, but today they are an unsatisfying prologue to a policy of reconstruction.

Once one starts with the premise that owing to the German mentality, the object of our occupation should be to break Germany as a political, and, it must therefore follow, as an economic force, a constructive policy for Germany becomes impossible. The author wisely regards the ownership of industry as the key to security in the future; he advocates the socialisation of the larger combines and he rightly regards the Trade Union movement as potentially one of the strongest safeguards for a new democracy in Germany. But at the same time, he advocates separation or, at least, a confederation of states as a desirable political end, and he does not lag far behind those enthusiasts who set out to disintegrate the whole German industrial complex and now find themselves without coal, steel, fertilisers, transport and boots. The courses which the author advocates conflict. Indeed, his book is similar to the outlook of our Military Government in 1945. One recalls memories of asphyxiating sessions in messes discussing the German character in which the participants concluded that a sixty-year occupation was needed for re-education, blithely unaware that their other policies and their method of government made re-education farcical. It is quite untrue to say that the British have no policy in Germany today. They have two policies: the first sprang from premises not unlike those of the author, and was fathered politically by nineteenth century liberalism; the second, a Socialist policy, finds itself in conflict with the first at every turn. That is why in Germany today our pre-Keynesian capitalist financial policy makes a monkey of our present political policy and our economic policy makes a monkey of both. Finally, let us add that the author when he wrote was still thinking in terms of a unified treatment of Germany by the Allies and did not contemplate that that country would be the last and the most dangerous counter to be played in the grim game that is in progress at Paris.

In *Pens Under the Swastika* Dr. Schütz, a Swiss journalist, pleads with us to remember that there were a number of German writers who succeeded in inserting anti-totalitarian references in works of scholarship or in humanistic or religious studies. Dr. Schütz rightly stresses the courage which it required to give vent to any opinion which could be construed as an oblique criticism of the regime, and in a book which gives particular prominence to religious writers, he bids us recall the proclamations of such men as the late Bishop of Münster. He is perhaps inclined to suggest that every anti-Nazi is in a state of grace and he would perhaps be shocked if he realised that some Catholic priests to-day vie with the Communists in appeals to crude Chauvinism. But it is an informative book and stimulates our appetite for modern German literature. Cannot Ernst Jünger's *Auf den Marmorklippen*, Grisebach's *Schicksalsfrage des Abendlandes* and von Martin's *Nietzsche und Burckhardt* be translated and published in London? But no . . . in my mind's eye I see someone reach for a sheet of minute paper and pick up his pen . . . trading with the enemy . . . Alas! for literature.

NOEL ANNAN

FAMILY PORTRAIT

The Trollopes. By LUCY POATE STEBBINS and RICHARD POATE STEBBINS. *Secker and Warburg.* 18*s.*

The biography of an entire family is an ambitious task, far more so than painting a family group. The painter can work on each face at leisure, link up his sketches as he likes in his composition; and yet the result that eventually meets the eye on the canvas is a united family. The writer has no such convenient frame in which to place his figures. After childhood families tend to disintegrate; and in the life of each separate member the ties of kinship grow less important and less interesting. But the American authors of *The Trollopes* have mastered these difficulties with great skill. The family of Thomas Anthony Trollope consisted of himself, his wife Frances, and six children. He himself was a well-educated man but an utter failure; and in early days the family was linked firmly together by misfortune and insolvency. By the time Frances and her son Anthony were famous novelists Thomas Anthony was dead, and only the eldest son Tom survived of the other children: the rest had all died young of consumption.

In the first unhappy period Mrs. Stebbins and her son bring to life in the most vivid way a group of radically uncongenial personalities, continually scattered by disaster and incompatibility, and reunited by illness, poverty and family loyalty. When only three are left, the difficulty of keeping these survivors in focus together becomes insuperable. Tom and his wife and mother live permanently in Florence; Anthony and his wife are in England; as a family the Trollopes are dissolved. Very sensibly then the authors lay the family portrait aside; turn the limelight for a few years on the Florentine villa until the death of Frances; and then switch their whole attention to completing the biography of Anthony, who, after all, is the predominant Trollope and the centre of interest.

Only by reading the book is it possible to appreciate the strange vicissitudes of upper middle-class life in England during the period 1815-40—with an odd excursion to the Middle West of the United States thrown in. Thomas Augustus, who had failed in everything he turned his hand to, evolved his most original method of losing money in 1827, when he sent off his wife and his son Henry to build a bazaar in Cincinnati for the sale of pepper pots and pin cushions to the local inhabitants. The bazaar was actually built, but the sale of pin cushions was disappointing. The usual bankruptcy ensued; and the building changed into more businesslike hands when it became a brothel. Yet, paradoxically enough, this mad venture became the foundation-stone of the family fortunes. For Frances Trollope (who had never written a book before in her life), on her return to England penniless at the age of fifty, published *The Domestic Manners of the Americans* as a memento of her experiences, made £800 by it, and established herself as a writer. The episode is completely characteristic of Anthony's father and mother; the unpractical and lethargic Thomas Anthony, whose only enthusiasm was for schemes, and the equally unpractical but indomitable Frances, who galloped round the world, dodging creditors, burying children, buying houses, writing books—she wrote 114 in 26 years—always in unquenchable spirits.

From this antithesis of energy and inertia Anthony Trollope, the great Victorian novelist, emerged. His fame is now in the ascendant once more after some thirty years of eclipse; but the public apathy towards him between 1890 and 1920, if we accept him as a genius, requires some explanation. Richard Garnett, writing in 1899 when Trollope was at his lowest ebb in popular favour, accuses his work of being "mechanical and devoid of all poetical and spiritual qualities." Perhaps that was the trouble—his lack of poetry and high-mindedness. But Garnett himself was too good a critic not to recognise an author's positive merits: "If to represent reality is to be a realist, Trollope is one of the greatest realists who ever wrote." And Garnett goes on to prophesy with astonishing felicity: "His works may fall into temporary oblivion, but when the twentieth century desires to estimate the nineteenth, they will be disinterred and studied with an attention accorded to no contemporary work of the kind." Disinterred they most certainly are, and not only studied but, *pace* Dr. Garnett, positively enjoyed; just because they are not spiritual and poetical but absolutely true to life. Trollope himself was well aware of the nature of his talent. He declared that he knew all his characters so intimately that, given any situation, he could tell exactly what each of them would have said and done, what clothes they would wear, and their very tone of voice. "When I shall feel that this intimacy ceases, then I shall know that the old horse should be turned out to grass." This passage occurs in his Autobiography, published in 1883 after his death; the candour of which can be held responsible for the injustice meted out to him for many subsequent years by the literary fraternity. For in that book he was guilty of two unforgivable breaches in professional etiquette: he said frankly that he wrote for money, and he treated the art of writing as a mere craft, like cabinet-making. In the eyes of critics and idealists, that a creative artist should not bow down and worship Art (with a capital A) is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Even now Trollope is barely forgiven.

There are traces of this unforgiving spirit in *The Trollopes*. The authors stigmatise his desire to make money as "the false standard which vitiated so much of his work"; and they trot out "his indifference to the need of real revision and excision" in order to quarrel with *Barchester Towers*. Indeed, they evince so much latent hostility towards the main character in their biography that one might wonder why they chose such an uncongenial subject. Then it transpires that their motive is to use this great writer, but unpleasant man, as a peg on which to hang a theory. (Admittedly, Trollope was not attractive in private life; he was loud-voiced, boisterous, yet not at his ease; a sort of *faux bonhomme*, fond of society but not in the least companionable.) The theory that Mrs. Stebbins and her son propound is that he was obsessed by his father's failure and his mother's success, resented it, and tried to redress the balance in his novels. A very Freudian and up-to-date theory, as you perceive. To judge of the merits of the theory I must refer you to the arguments brought up in the book, but I say outright that I myself do not believe one word of it. The main figure in the novels chosen to be a father-reincarnation is Plantagenet Palliser, who became Duke of Omnium; and his wife, Lady Glencora, is supposed to represent the flightiness of Frances Trollope. What were Anthony Trollope's father's chief characteristics? A vile temper and an unpractical nature. "Planty Pal" has neither; he suffers from awkwardness in society and an inability to rouse affection in anyone—but the readers of Trollope. If he is to be identified with anyone, it should be Trollope himself—a theory which *I* could adduce some evidence to commend. But these psychological quests into the unconscious meaning of works of art, though most intriguing, can be exceedingly unfruitful. The subtle alchemy at work in an artist's brain defeats the ordinary understanding like the way of an eagle in the air or the way of a serpent upon a rock. And, if we are to pull on our Freudian boots, I should like to know why Mrs. Stebbins and her son show such a marked predilection for Mrs. Frances Trollope and her son Tom in their delightful Florentine menage. Is this another artistic reincarnation?

RALPH PARTRIDGE

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VISUAL ART

Michelangelo — The Sistine Ceiling. By CHARLES DE TOLNAY. *Princeton University Press.* 106s. 6d.

The Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci. By A. E. POPHAM. *Jonathan Cape.* 42s.

Degas. Works in Sculpture. Edited by JOHN REWALD. *Kegan Paul.* 84s.

Mural Painting. By HANS FEIBUSCH. *Black.* 21s.

Three or four times in the history of European art, all the flowers of the human spirit have come out together in a blaze of colour. We spend our time apologising, in the manner of Ruth Draper, for the present: "You should have seen the roses in 1872. As for the delphiniums in 1426, they were a marvel. . . ." The garden was looking its best in the decade 1503–1513. Into these momentous years were crammed almost the total output of Giorgione and some of Titian's most lyrical inventions. Bellini at the age of seventy was just getting into his stride. Leonardo was at work on the *Battle of Anghiari*, Bramante on designs for the new St. Peter's, Raphael in the Stanza della Segnatura and Michelangelo on his precarious scaffolding in the Sistine Chapel. Such spontaneous florescence could only occur in a country where an artistic tradition was powerful enough to generate genius, and at a time when the need to express a new relationship between man and the universe became urgent. Mr. de Tolnay in the second volume of his exhaustive biography of Michelangelo, demonstrates how, in tackling the decoration of the Sistine ceiling, the artist borrowed freely from antique and Renaissance models, and how he transformed these models to illustrate a new conception of man's place in the universe. By arranging the episodes from the *Drunkenness of Noah* to the *Separation of Light from Darkness*, Michelangelo intended to describe the gradual emancipation of man from the slavery of the flesh to the realisation of his highest faculties. To view the frescoes in this order, is to reverse their natural sequence, but the idea of progressive deification is common in Neoplatonic thought and indeed can be found in Michelangelo's own sonnets. Mr. de Tolnay rightly lays emphasis on the importance which Michelangelo attached to the choice and disposition of his histories and single figures, and is the first critic to read the frescoes from entrance to altar, although it had long been recognised that those nearest the entrance had been painted first. Indeed, anyone who had the opportunity in 1938 to climb on to the scaffolding near the entrance, will recall how certain details of the early frescoes were only visible from close to, whereas the later figures became bolder and more massive. Mr. de Tolnay has cut away some of the dead wood of romantic speculation about this ceiling, and in his dry objective approach to the subject has produced what may become the standard work of reference.

Whereas Michelangelo represented man in his struggle to free himself from his earthbound nature, Leonardo, at the opposite pole of the Renaissance, chose earthiness as his subject by investigating every aspect of the material world, literally from the embryo to the grave. To Michelangelo a leafless tree is a convenient symbol for desolation; in Leonardo's hands it becomes a botanical specimen observed in the Arno valley in January. The figure of an old man on the Sistine ceiling stands as the embodiment of sagacity; but Leonardo sat the old man down before him and recorded the sparse hair, the boil on the neck, the play of wrinkles across the forehead. Michelangelo's most ordinary objects have no corporeal reality, but even when Leonardo invented extraordinary forms, the aeroplane, the hydraulic lift, the dragon and the fantastic landscape, he still persuades us that if such objects could exist, they would take that shape or fulfil that function. "Also, if need shall arise," he writes to Lodovico Sforza, "I can make cannon, mortars and light ordnance, of very beautiful and useful shapes, quite different from those in common use." Mr. Popham of the British Museum has brought together the largest selection of Leonardo drawings so far published in England. This volume and Sir Kenneth Clark's superb catalogue of the Windsor collection, together provide the most coherent account in existence of Leonardo as a draughtsman. By a division of the drawings into subjects instead of chronologically, Mr. Popham has introduced the only possible order into the chaos of Leonardo's jottings. The unparalleled range of Leonardo's mind, and his tendency to switch from subject to subject and years later to take up again some abandoned project, make it difficult to unravel the skein of his development; but the reader in need of a frame-work may consult a useful list of dates at the beginning of this book, and must constantly bear in mind the few extant paintings which punctuate Leonardo's life—like milestones on a tortuous journey. My only criticism is the author's use

pp

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FOREWORD BY

Sir Stanley Marchant

C.V.O., M.A., D.Mus.(Oxon), F.S.A., F.R.A.M., F.R.C.M., F.R.C.O.

VICTOR BOOTH, Professor and examiner in the Royal Academy of Music, gives a clever exposition of the results of more than 40 years' experience as a Teacher on HOW TO STUDY, HOW TO TEACH, HOW TO PLAY Music as well as the Pianoforte. It is an attempt to supply a long-felt want for those about to enter the music-teaching profession.

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of a clumsy waste-paper-basket called "Compositions" into which all drawings without an obvious label have been indiscriminately thrown. Separate chapters might have been allotted to portraits, studies for the *Last Supper*, for *Leda*, for the *Battle of Anghiari*, for the *Virgin with St. Anne* and so forth. But in general Mr. Popham has done full justice to his fascinating subject and deserves to be read by a wide public.

"He would make clay models of figures, draping them with soft rags dipped in plaster" This is the description in Vasari of Leonardo's preparatory studies for some of his drawings, but it might equally well have been applied to some lost statuette by Degas, similar to the *Petite danseuse de quatorze ans*. Degas dressed up his statuette in gauze, gave it a pair of little shoes to wear and a real ribbon for its pig-tail; then he coated the dress in wax and tinted the wax to make the figure more lifelike. The result was perhaps the most animated and most realist work of sculpture ever modelled by a great artist. Later he abandoned real dresses, as he found he could simulate the texture of a dress by rough modelling. With the newly invented art of instantaneous photography as his guide, Degas studied horses and dancers in action, so that almost all his models for sculpture are shown engaged in strenuous exercise, either galloping, trotting, jumping or pirouetting. However quickly he worked—and he needed to work quickly to catch the fleeting movement before the wax or the clay hardened—he found the greatest difficulty in getting people to pose for him, so exacting were his instructions. Some unfortunate women were made to carry out for his benefit the graceless contortions of sitting in a circular tub washing their feet or worse still the small of their backs, long after they were clean. Like Flaubert with words, he carried on a perpetual battle with his material. Wax melted and sagged; the wire and the brush handles he used to strengthen his figures were too thin or too hastily fitted together, with the result that his studio was littered with fragments of sculpture which from sheer neglect had disintegrated with the years. His apparent indifference to the durability of his statues, combined with a natural secretiveness, has meant that very little information about Degas as a sculptor has come down to us, but Mr. Rewald has assembled in his book all the facts at present known, and almost all ever likely to be known, on the subject, as well as adequate reproductions of bronzes cast after Degas' death from the remaining wax or clay originals.

The problem of mural painting, like architecture, is largely one of patronage: poems and easel-pictures can be produced in periods when the artist is ignored, but a fresco requires money and enlightenment; and we lack our Julius II. This was the artist's tragedy in the late nineteenth century, potentially a great epoch of naturalistic mural painting; it still remains the tragedy of the twentieth. Mr. Feibusch does not make this crucial point clear, but seems to be content, in an engaging but rather ineffectual way, to imagine how delightful it would be if schools, restaurants and other institutions would employ the best painters to decorate their walls. But they won't.

BENEDICT NICOLSON

BLUM

For All Mankind. By LÉON BLUM. Translated by W. Pickles. *Gollancz.* 6s.

A l'Echelle Humaine, of which this book is a translation, was published in France early in 1945, and it was, as Mr. Pickles says in his preface, like a voice from the dead. M. Blum had written it in 1940 and 1941 when a prisoner of the Vichy Government at Bourrasol and Fort du Pourtalet; the MS. had actually been smuggled out of the prison in 1942. The book is therefore heavily dated, whether as a historical or a personal document. That fact gives it a good deal of its interest and value. It attempts an analysis of the social and political causes which produced the collapse of France, the military defeat and still more the moral defeat embodied in Vichy and collaboration. It is, of course, much more than an analysis, for it looks before and after. In the spirit in which M. Blum examines the past of France and looks through his prison bars at its future there is something remarkable and moving; it is this which gives to the book its value as a personal document. Good and even great books seem to be easier to produce in prison than in freedom and M. Blum joins a distinguished and numerous company of literary prisoners. He writes without bitterness or fear in circumstances in which both might have been excusable. He is the most civilized, humane, and intelligent of men, and one feels, as one reads him, that if ten per cent. of the world's inhabitants were as he is, there would have been no need for the Almighty to turn it into one gigantic Sodom and Gomorrah.

As a historical document the book is hardly less interesting, though less satisfying since it leaves the reader with many queries in his mind. A good deal of it is occupied with a defence of democracy. Mr. Pickles points out that this may seem strange to many English readers who do not fully realize that democracy was never as firmly established or accepted in France as it has been in Britain. It is, of course, also due to the fact that the book was actually being written behind prison bars at a moment when democracy had been completely blotted out by Hitler and Vichy, and it is perhaps less surprising that M. Blum should have felt it necessary to defend democracy than that he should, in the time and circumstances in which he was writing, have had such complete confidence in its resurrection.

In his diagnosis of the social disease which brought France to Vichy and ruin, he admits that the Left and, among the parties of the Left, the Socialists were not blameless. But the disease itself, he argues, was the French bourgeoisie. His description of their social incompetence, greed, and lack of faith in themselves is devastating, but convincing. Trotsky once wrote that "the fundamental premise of a revolution is that the existing social structure has become incapable of solving the urgent problems of development of the nation. . . . The ruling classes, as the result of their practically manifested incapacity to get the country out of its blind alley, lose faith in themselves. . . ." That is an exact description of France and the French bourgeoisie from 1920 to 1940. The bourgeoisie clung to political power, but were unable to use it for any purpose except the lining of their pockets. But Trotsky adds: "A revolution becomes possible, however, only in case the society contains a new class capable of taking the lead in solving the problems presented by history." The tragedy of France—and perhaps the root of her social disease—lay in the fact that there was no class capable of doing this, capable of taking the power out of the feeble hands of the bourgeoisie and "solving the problems presented by history." M. Blum is aware of this; at one moment he explicitly admits it and raises the question "why the working class, acting through its legitimate representatives, did not seize the succession left open by the collapse of the bourgeoisie." What he says about it is all true, but it leaves the reader unsatisfied. The analysis does not go deep enough, and because it does not, he does not give one the foundation upon which one might share with him his optimism about the future.

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Company Meeting

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The 17th annual general meeting of Telephone Rentals, Ltd., was held on October 7th in London.

Mr. Fred T. Jackson, O.B.E., Comp.I.E.E. (Chairman and Joint Managing Director), in the course of his speech, said:—

Our net profit is £136,728, as compared with £139,794, and we are proposing to pay the same dividend as hitherto, namely 10 per cent. less tax, of which 4 per cent. has already been paid as an interim dividend.

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The report was adopted.

Week-end Competitions

No. 869

Competition set by Roger Marvell

Competitors are invited to write an imaginary reply in not more than 200 words from Dr. Johnson, Macaulay, Mathew Arnold, [Carlyle, Pater, Henry James or Bernard Shaw to a complaint that he was out of touch with popular taste. Entries by Oct. 22nd.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 866

Set by Maurice Cassel

The usual prizes are offered for imaginary conversations between namesakes, for example Groucho Marx and Karl Marx, S. (Erewhon) Butler and S. (Hudibras) Butler, or even Oscar Wilde and Jonathan Wild, Jane Austen and Alfred Austin, Edmund Spenser and Herbert Spencer. Limit 200 words.

Report by Maurice Cassel

The choice of subject was wide. The most popular was Karl and Groucho Marx (who may well be the earnest intellectual that one competitor made him). Nobody introduced Harpo, but there were two dialogues between the brothers Zola (in one of which Gorgon was completely articulate). Oscar Wilde and Jonathan Wild, a popular and apparently most promising subject, proved disappointing. Dr. Johnson had several protagonists, among them Amy Johnson, Pussyfoot Johnson and Ben Jonson. He seemed most at his ease in various encounters with Jack Johnson. Nor were other lexicographers neglected. I was glad to see recorded a number of meetings between George Eliot and T. S. Eliot; a scholarly effort by Constance Sewell just lacked the ultimate spark. Allan M. Laing provided a competent interview between G. B. S. and Captain Shaw ("... I should say that my own line of fireworks has brought a great deal more credit to the Shaws than your activities as a wet blanket"). It is difficult to quote from D. S. Best's truly Joycean dialogue (between James and William) which characteristically far outran all bounds of space.

L. E. J.'s Wild-Wilde ("... With an e dear boy, with an e. Nothing creates such a gulf as a terminal letter. ... Oscar and Jonathan may not have been pleasant in their lives, but in their names they are deeply divided") was a near winner. W. Stewart's Wild was excellent ("Then sling your hook, pretty gentleman, afore I sets the redbreasts on you.")

And now for the invidious matter of the prize-winners. I award twenty-five shillings each to Harold Ellis (for a convincing Marx), to Tyntax (for ingenuity), to R. J. P. Hewison (for wit), to R. W. Fordham (there is no space for his Victoria Cross and Victoria Regina); and twelve and sixpence each to Richard Massie (Sir Henry Morgan and J. P. Morgan) and Stanley J. Sharpless (Marx).

A conversation between Groucho Marx and Karl Marx

Groucho: If it isn't Karl Marx, the man who put the bore in bourgeois.

Karl: Guten Morgen Groucho. I should like with you to discuss the use-value of the cinema. Your labour, is it socially necessary?

Groucho: Same old Karl. In America your name is a household word—I wish I could tell you the word. But you're my kind of a man, Karl. If I were my kind of a woman I'd slap your face.

Karl: The proletariat you underpay, without whom you cannot your commodity produce.

Groucho: Thus spake Zarathustra. Remember, you can't touch pictures and not be defiled.

Karl: Your films have I seen, but they so static are. ...

Groucho: And who am I to say you're right?

Karl: Society you attack, but your standpoint is what? Of the values you a false set have.

Groucho: Ah, but what a false set! The only time I saw teeth like those before was when a gift horse looked me in the mouth.

Karl: I think, mein friend, you are something of an oaf.

Groucho: So what? Half an oaf is better than no bread.

HAROLD ELLIS

From TIMELESS Magazine, N.Y.

TALKING—in London, Eng., the Daltons—early English experimentalist John, and socialist sur-tax administrator Hugh. Seeking Anderson shelter by disclaiming PAYE tables, income inquisitor Hugh awarded clan palm to namesake John for tables of atomic weights (*see* TIMELESS, 1805). Said John (HEREAFTER'S special correspondent at Bikini), "I doubt the continued existence of human atomic values." Added that he was looking forward to publication of front-bench physicist Hugh's *Treasury of Extraction*, which will re-state the clan creed—"Pressure increases with capacity." TYNTAX

BROWNE, Sir THOMAS *v.* BROWNE, C. F. (*alias* WARD, ARTEMUS) WARD, Mrs. HUMPHREY) *intervening.*

C. F.: Skoos me, Squire, mebbe you'd tell us wheres us two air?

Sir T.: In some præterlunary sphære whereof the *ubi sit* my comprehension fetches not unto.

C. F.: We ain't sperrits?

Sir T.: Even so—conjured hither by some coincidental homonymy. Yet by what commixture of Ages or temporal interfusion the horizons of our *florwits* thus transect were a nice *Quære* which, happily wee have all Æternitie to indagate.

C. F.: You may have all tarnity for yor Enkuise Within: it's 2 tarnation longsum 4 me. But say, you suttinly utter swell. Is it the floin Bole, or did you swaller the Dickshunary? Who air you?

Sir T.: Thomas Browne, physician and Christian, of Norwich.

C. F.: I'm Charles Farrer Browne. My native heath this week is Dodworth Hall. Showman and humorist.

Sir T.: I had suspected your humours to be oddly compounded.

C. F.: Odd-yay. Confounded—nay, nay!

Mrs. H. W.: Mr. Ward! I had expected *you* to take me through the Turnstile. It was neither manly nor gentlemanly to forget an appointment.

C. F.: Sakes alive! My Alius has gotten me in2 dubble trubble. Your sarvant, marm. (*Exit with Mrs. W.*)

Sir T.: Whether the pseudonymous nuncupation known to the generations of Adam bee not the more substantial ... (*fades into Æternitie imponderating this*).

R. J. P. HEWISON

Dr. Johnson: "I am told, Sir, that you display much address in the Prize Ring."

Jack Johnson: "Yep, Doc, Ah sure can play dat game."

Dr. Johnson: "Sir, I have no concern with games; but he who is proficient in the art of self defence justly secures the applause of the multitude and the approbation of the judicious."

Jack Johnson: "And de dollars of de fight fans."

Dr. Johnson: "Why yes, Sir; the labourer is not unworthy of his hire, and, Sir, self defence demands——"

Jack Johnson: "Hi—ya! Doc; a tucked-in chin and a dandy guard won't ring no bell. You *gotter hand it out* good and plenty."

Dr. Johnson: "If, Sir, you imply that a strong attack is complementary to a sound defence, I will not contest the point."

Jack Johnson: "Dere ain't no-one contests no points wid me, Doc: 'tain't recommendable."

Dr. Johnson: "I would have you know, Sir, that I do not fear you. When a man is impertinent to me I beat him."

Jack Johnson (*aside, but overheard by the Dr.*): "Some sand in de ole guy!"

Dr. Johnson (*later to Boswell*): "Jack, Sir, is a prodigy, and Jack is a gentleman; but I am not to be bubbled about by any man."

E. W. FORDHAM

Appointments Vacant

UNIV. of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Lectureship in Political Science. (Political Theory and Institutions.) Applics. invited for post of Independent Lecturer in Political Science in the University of Otago. Sal. £750 to £825 p.a. Full partics. obtainable from High Commissioner for New Zealand, 415 Strand, London, W.C.2, with whom applications close on October 28th.

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B.B.C. invites applics. for Accompanist, London. Qualifics: first class technical ability, exp. in all types of accompanying including orchestral work, playing of Celesta, etc. To be able to transpose and have sufficient solo-playing ability to undertake short piano interludes at a moment's notice. Maximum starting salary £690, rising to £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Accompanist London," within 7 days. For reply enclose stamped addressed envelope.

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